

**University College London  
Department of Information Studies**

**PhD Thesis**

**Towards Activating School Libraries in Qatar**

**Mohammed A.S.M. Al-Kaabi**

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I, Mohammed A.S.M. Al-Kaabi, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

**Signature:**

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines school libraries in Qatar between 2002-2012, assessing purpose, operation and evaluation and mapping provision against policy during this critical period of evolution of educational and digital development. It also considers research practice and communication in the school library sector in Qatar.

The research is unique in providing a comprehensive study of school libraries at national and local levels, involving librarians, academics, students and parents through a mixed method approach combining interviews, surveys and library visits, supported by exceptional access to internal government reports enabling a systematic analysis of research and policy documentation in Qatar.

Key findings identify a lack of coherent research culture at all levels shared across education and library communities in Qatar. There are also wider difficulties with systematic publication and retrieval of research and best practice literature across Arab nations. Current national reform recognizes the importance of literate, independent Qatari learners in a global digital environment, but there is limited understanding of the contribution school libraries and librarians can make to this, at strategic level, amongst teachers and students and even amongst some library practitioners. The research found that school librarians can offer much to literacies and cultural heritage.

Recommendations are made for development of: research culture, curriculum mapping, evaluation, recognition of school librarians as education professionals working in equal partnership with teaching colleagues, and training and development. Also recommended are: the creation of a professional body and support network for librarians, an advocacy campaign and the development of practical models and toolkit resources. A key role is proposed for the Qatar National Library to lead evidence-based research and practical action in the field of (school) libraries in the Middle East.

It is anticipated that the findings and recommendations can usefully inform strategy and practice at national and individual school levels in Qatar.

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## **EDITORIAL CONVENTIONS**

The citation system used in this thesis is Harvard style.

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## **GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS USED**

### **Government Officials interviewed**

ACA	Assistant Under-Secretary for Cultural Affairs
DDSL	Director of the Department of School Libraries at the Ministry of Education
DIOE	Director of the Institute of Education, Supreme Education Council
DSLQF	Director of School Libraries at the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development
HDNC	Head of Department for the National Curriculum
ME	Minister of Education
US	Under Secretary

### **Public Schools quoted from the National Survey**

AIS	Al Shammal Intermediate School
KBAISB	Khalid Bin Ahmed Intermediate School for Boys

### **Independent Schools**

ABIS	Abu Baker Independent School	[Primary, boys]
ABTS	Ali Bin Talib Independent School	[Secondary, boys]
ABWIS	Amna Bint Wahab Independent School	[Secondary, girls]
AWIS	Al-Wajbah Independent School	[Middle, girls]
AYIS	Al-Yarmouk Independent School	[Middle, boys]
DIS	Doha Independent School	[Secondary, boys]
KIS	Khalifa Independent School	[Primary, girls]
OIAKIS	Omer Ibin Al-Khatab Independent School	[Middle, boys]

### **Institutions, organizations and other terms**

*The country of origin of the organization is indicated in brackets if it is not evident from the organization name.*

AASL	American Association of School Librarians
AECT	Association for Education Communication and Technology
ALA	American Library Association
ALESCO	Arabic Leagues Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization
ASLA	Australian School Library Association
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals [United Kingdom]
DfES	Department for Education and Skills [England]
DIB	Doha International Bureau [Qatar]
FAIFE	IFLA Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IASL	International Association of School Librarians

ictQATAR	Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology [Qatar]
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
ILC(W)	Information Literacy Curriculum (Wales)
ISESCO	The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
LIS	Library and Information Science
LISC	Library and Information Services Council [England]
LMS	Library Media Specialist [USA]
LRC	Learning Resource Centre
MLA	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council [England]
NCLIS	National Commission on Libraries and Information Science [USA]
NYCRR	New York Codes of Rules and Regulations
NYSEd	New York State Education Department
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills [England]
OPAC	Open public access catalogue
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment [OECD reading research project]
QCEA	Qatar Comprehensive Education Assessment
QDSL	Department of School Libraries [Qatar]
QF	Qatar Foundation
QGSDP	General Secretariat for Development Planning [Qatar]
QMoe	Ministry of Education [Qatar]
QNCCC	Qatar National Children's Cultural Council
QNL	Qatar National Library
QSSC	Qatar Senior School Certificate
QSEC	Supreme Education Council [Qatar]
SILC	Scottish Information Literacy Curriculum
SLA	School Library Association [United Kingdom]
SLIC	Scottish Library and Information Council
SLMS	School Library Media Specialist [USA]
SLN	School Librarians Network [a UK-based informal yahoo discussion forum]
SLS	School Library Service [United Kingdom]
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## **Chapter 1: JUSTIFICATION AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH**

### **1 Context**

This research examines the position of school libraries in the State of Qatar in a period of substantial educational reform. It is set within a timeframe of 2002-2012, spanning the transition from the public schools system operated by the Ministry of Education into the present independent schools system run by the Supreme Education Council.

The study surveys the position of school libraries in Qatar since their establishment, examining how they have functioned within a centralized system and the implications for role, management and staffing in the new devolved independent school system. In particular it explores the relationship of the school library to the priorities of national education policy and implications for effective contribution to this purpose during a critical period of Qatar's development. It is anticipated that the findings from the study will inform school library policy decisions taken at both national and local levels in Qatar.

#### **1.1 The inspiration for this research**

This stems from the author's experiences as an Inspector (1995-1997) and then Head of the School Library Department in the Ministry of Education in Qatar during 1997-2000; as a consequence of postgraduate research in library science at the University of Arizona, and interaction, as Cultural Attaché, with Qatari students undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate study in British and Irish universities. As Head of the School Library Department the author was able to effect policy to a limited extent, achieving greater autonomy and better financial support for the Department of School Libraries. These results, which were achieved during the author's time in office, could be regarded as a step forward but demand a fresh approach in the context of current structural changes to school management and curriculum.

Central to this research is the pace of educational change in Qatar. Since 2002 with the creation of the Supreme Education Council, there has been an educational revolution, with on average 12.24 % of the country's budget being spent annually on education during 2002- 2007. By the end of the academic year 2010/11 the centrally-managed school library offer was phased out and currently all schools are independently

managed. These developments have provided an opportunity to reconsider the current position of school libraries and librarians, both in relation to their role, function and status and in relation to identified good practice for libraries in the 21<sup>st</sup>. century.

At the same time, there has been rapid digital development in the period defined as the scope of this research, with transition from a situation where there was relatively limited access to computers in homes and in schools, to the place of digitization of resources and the use of smart technology at the centre of Government initiatives.

Out of this inspiration and context have come the two assumptions underpinning this thesis, namely that:

*the role of school libraries and the contribution of school librarians to 21<sup>st</sup> century education is not as yet recognized within Qatari society and the development of education policy;*

and

*there is a need for strategic and practical development of school libraries and librarians to deliver this contribution effectively.*

A key motivation for the study undertaken was that there appeared to be a lack of a critical evaluation relating to school libraries in Qatar, either in professional literature or in government reports. It was felt to be important to establish what systematic research existed into Qatari public school libraries which might help policy makers build on the approach underpinning the previous system and which could then be used to inform and assist policy and practical development in the new education system, post 2002. Linked to this was the need to understand how research practice and communication at scholarly and practitioner levels operates at a strategic level towards ongoing support of policy and decision-making.

Preliminary investigation identified that while there are a range of internal general government reports covering aspects such as statistics generally on education, funding and management only two studies exist that examined public school libraries. Both are

at Masters degree level (Aboud, 1994 and Al-Emadi, 1998), both carried out prior to the education reforms of 2002. These Masters studies concentrated on surveying the views of librarians, and are focused at a local level (Aboud, in public primary and elementary schools and Al-Emadi in public primary, elementary and secondary schools). Both highlighted the same range of issues: inadequacies of the training of librarians; the role, qualifications and salaries of librarians within schools, the majority of staff (over 79% according to Aboud) being part-time rather than full-time; poor physical library spaces within the schools; the inadequacy of the collection and the way in which the collection is selected; issues around access to IT and wider access through extended opening hours (Al-Emadi), and finally, the need for cooperation between teachers and librarians in supporting students' reading and learning. These studies are interesting historically and present a basis for more extensive research.

## **1.2 The original contribution of this research**

This comes from the need both for more up-to-date investigation, post the 2002 reforms, and for a study which would embrace a national overview, examining the views and experiences of a wide range of stakeholders, in order to build up a comprehensive picture of the place of the school library in Qatari education. This research therefore combines surveys, interviews and observations of school libraries from a number of different groups, namely Government ministers and national policy makers, public and independent school librarians, independent school principals, higher education lecturers and librarians at the University of Qatar. It was felt to be particularly important to include the views of school library users in order to understand better their perceptions of the value of the library in their development. Accordingly, this research includes findings from surveys of students representing all phases of Qatari state education; Qatari students studying on graduate and post-graduate programmes in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and a small sample of parental views. As such, this research breaks new ground: in its focus on the post-reform educational system, in its national scope and in the triangulation of aspiration and experience across diverse stakeholders.

These critical and professional concerns drive the justification of this study. From the formulation of the hypotheses seeking to understand the position and perception of value of school libraries and librarians in Qatar today, and their development, have emerged the key questions that shape this research:

***Question 1: What evidence exists of the critical evaluation of the role and effect of public school libraries in Qatar, which might be used by policy makers to inform school library development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?***

***Question 2: How has the development of educational policy within Qatar influenced the role and activity of school libraries within the last 30 years?***

***Question 3: What are the critical factors contributing to successful school libraries which may be identified from the experience of other countries, and how do the experiences of Qatari public school libraries compare with these?***

These key questions set out the agenda for the research, addressing the issue of a gap in existing critical research and the identification of strengths and areas for development. From this research are proposed recommendations for policy development and future practice that may be used to develop the new independent school library system.

### **1.3 The aim of this research**

The aim, therefore, is to gather information from a range of sources to define the current position of public school libraries in Qatar and to evaluate this in relation to wider understanding of school library research, purpose, services and perceived benefits. This study therefore is pioneering in that it is the first of its kind to be conducted aimed at a national review of Qatari school library provision.

### **1.4 The beneficiaries of this research**

These are expected to be Qatari school principals, librarians and political decision makers, by providing a comprehensive view of the existing provision and current strategic research offer, and to link these with best practice derived from the literature and practical examples from the United Kingdom as a case focus, enabling beneficiaries to utilize the knowledge obtained from this study to address future challenges.

In addition, this research – albeit focused on school libraries in Qatar – may be of wider benefit to other countries and school library professionals who are also experiencing transitional development or dealing with similar strategic research and communication issues.

## **Chapter 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **2. Introduction**

This chapter explores the debate that has developed over the past fifty years in relation to the aims, objectives, aspirations and good practices of school libraries and their contribution to the curricula of schools and the learning of students. The literature that informs this debate is drawn from research, policies, and specialist school library standards documentation from the United Kingdom and from international sources including the United States of America, the Gulf States and Qatar.

The chapter commences with an examination of the philosophy, aims and objectives of school libraries and extends into the definition of good practice and standards. It considers perceptions of school libraries for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The review explores the role of school libraries in reader development, promotion of literacies and the importance of information literacy. It then moves to the area of school library management to discuss crucial issues related to management, specifically funding and budgetary control, and the collection. The management theme is extended to examine the students as users of the school library, staffing and the key aspect of monitoring and evaluation which is fundamental to ensuring quality provision.

Discussion of research studies concerning school library value and policy in the Middle East and in Qatar specifically is covered in Chapter 4, in addressing the first research question of this thesis. Likewise, discussion of government documentation covering policy and strategy is addressed in Chapter 5 when considering the second research question of the thesis.

#### **2.1 Philosophy, aims and objectives of the school library**

In terms of setting out the philosophy and aims of good library practice, the guidance and pronouncements of international bodies such as UNESCO and IFLA are valuable because they present best practice that all countries can aspire to, although it is recognized that this is not always attainable. The UNESCO (1960) guidance is an important starting point, both in historical terms but in the way that it places the school library in the heart of literacy and learning. The UNESCO Intergovernmental

Conference on the Planning of National Documentation, Library and Archives in Paris summarized the role of the school libraries as follows:

*School libraries can have a great impact on a child's intellectual and cultural development. It is at that stage that the individual most easily learns to use books and libraries and acquire "functional literacy" thus ensuring that when he leaves school he does not relapse into illiteracy. This is particularly important since adult semi-literacy is being recognized as a problem even in some developed countries. Far too few resources are up to now being put into the development of school libraries in many countries* (UNESCO 1960:26).

Greenwood, Creaser and Maynard (2009:90) stress the important role played by libraries in supporting the development of reading, specifically in primary school. The nature of the collection that helps define the school library, students' engagement and use of the library and the library space itself and its contribution of the school library to a school's overall learning objectives are all critical and are explored individually within this chapter. The significance of the school library in helping independent learners goes beyond providing resources and engaging learners. The United Kingdom's Department for Education and Skills stated:

*The school library is the heart of the school, which itself has learning at its core and good libraries can empower the learner. The resources in a library can allow our imagination to run free, introduce us to new experience and promote access to knowledge and enjoyment* (DfES 2004a:4).

IFLA (IFLA/UNESCO 2002 rev 2006) state that the function of a modern school library is to equip students with long term learning skills which will enable them to improve their critical learning abilities in knowledge-based present day society. Implicit within this is the concept of the school librarian as an educator with a range of competencies, skills, knowledge and experience (Tilke 2002:30) enabling students to develop key skills. Tilke highlights this point when he cites the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), as quoted by Small (2002) who asked the question 'Are librarians teachers?' (Tilke 2002:28). While the discussion explores the librarian in relation to the status, salary and employment conditions the librarian as an educator needs to be acknowledged. Tilke additionally discusses the role of the librarian as a pastoral tutor supporting personal and social education.

Another important perspective on the aims and objectives of the school library focuses on the school library's response and recognition of the learner's needs. Such recognition of the needs of children and youth for library services was reported by the Library and Information Services Council (England) and Working Party on Library Services for Children and Young People:

*We believe that the need of the individual within this group for books, for libraries and for encouragement of reading and the use of information, should be the starting point for any consideration of library service delivered to them whether through public libraries, school library service, or other channels, and that recognition of these needs should inform and determine the aims and objectives of all libraries that serve this client group (LISC, 1995:5).*

This document recognized the need of young people to have access to books and libraries and for encouraging reading and using information, within a wider co-operative or integrated partnership of library services. In addition, it highlighted other important goals such as developing teamwork and knowledge such as IT which young people will utilize in their future careers. The DfES (2000) has stated that libraries have always been central to education and self-improvement, and that they have the power to act as motors for more dynamic and effective learning, whether for individuals or for groups. At school, college or university, the library plays a vital supportive role as a source of research and reading material or as a place of study.

## **2.2 The History and development of the school library**

The concept of the school library has moved and developed from more simple to complex definitions. Ray (1982) researching primary schools, considered the United Kingdom used the term '*library*' to describe a concept of resource organization within (primary) schools. According to Ray,

*"In case of all these schools, it is convenient to use the term 'library' to describe the whole stock of the school, apart from sets of readers and textbooks. Even if there is a central library in a room too small to be used as a classroom or in the corridor or foyer, the majority of the school's resources are likely to be found in the classroom (Ray 1982:4-10).*

By the late 1950s the idea of the primary school having a library had become popular. According to Ray (1982), the late 1950s witnessed a controversy about the desirability of having a central collection. She recorded that some primary schools were provided with small rooms designated as 'libraries'; others had a more general circulation space designed in such a way that an area of it could be used as a central library.

During the 1960s the school library was given a very functional definition, as there was more focus on the accessible facilities that the library could offer in addition to books. During that period the concept of the resource centre became popular. The functional definition of the school library was reshaping as librarians began using the term 'resource centre' to describe what was essentially an extension of the traditional book-based library to include a wide range of learning materials and facilities for all such materials to be used. Ray has cited the example of schools in the UK, towards the end of 1960s which were planned with the resource centre at the heart of the school.

Since then there has been a major shift in the methods of teaching and learning in schools to include understanding of students' learning styles. The focus of most of the educational and learning methods has moved from didactic teaching to students' self direction (personalized learning). There has also been a need to develop a multi-dimensional definition of the school library and its staff to encompass the whole process of learning and the way that it contributes to lifelong learning.

This has resulted in a modern concept which combines the old definitions of resource support with such factors as the relationship between the school library and a country's school curriculum and the need for developing individual learners who will be capable of handling and making the optimal use of information. These trends in defining the school library have also focused on its role which has been viewed not only as supportive to the curriculum but also as vital and significant to learners' educational development for the whole of their life. As a result, the school library has been viewed as the starting point for educationalists, planners and teaching staff. Al-Suffi observes,

*The development of education and enhancing the quality of learning should not depend only on curriculum, but it should go further to include the modern methods of learning which focus on providing learners with skills that enable them to obtain information and facts from different*

*sources and it also help them to apply these information in any other assignment whether these assignments are educational or cultural or otherwise* (Al-Suffi 2001:11-12).

Similarly, guidelines on secondary school libraries issued by CILIP, the UK Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, note that:

*The school library provides learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media, with links to the wider library and information network, according to the principles in the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto*  
(Barrett and Douglas 2004:1).

The school library is importantly seen as a repository of information, ideas and opinions that enables and supports the development of students providing the basis for learning playing “a key role in helping pupils to become independent and lifelong learners” (HMI 2002:1).

This understanding is very important as it positions the library as central and active in the learner’s life. It has contributed to changing the function of the school library evolving from being a store of books, to a whole-school organization and resource centre, to becoming an active teaching and learning centre integrated into the curriculum enabling learners to develop. The library embraces a wide range of resources that serve both the school community and potentially the larger community outside the school in different aspects of life as in the examples cited by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Schools (HMI) where

*Pupils’ families and members of the public also make use of the library and this helps to further the partnership between school, family and community. In this way, the benefits can go beyond the learning outcomes of the whole school to the family and wider community* (HMI 2002:2).

Along with the evolution of the school library has come a parallel development of commercial services that support libraries and professional support that contributes to the training and continued professional support of librarians. These include book fairs; companies that specialize in school library furniture and equipment; cataloguing

systems; conferences to promote librarianship and best practice; display materials; electronic resources; library building and design and are examined separately later within the review of literature.

### **2.2.1 School libraries for the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

The role of the school library has changed positively in different parts of the world. UNESCO in collaboration with IFLA have helped guide school library development through the creation of guidelines that state

*the school library provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today's society, which is increasingly information and knowledge-based. The school library equips students with lifelong learning skills and development of the imagination, enabling them to live as responsible citizens (UNESCO/IFLA 2000).*

These guidelines provide both practitioners and decision makers with principles and guidance. The principle of freedom to obtain and use information for learning purposes has been identified as one of the basic human entitlements, creating links between library services within the school and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. The guidelines state that the school library should provide learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media, with links to the wider library and information network.

The UNESCO/IFLA School Library Manifesto (2000), records that good practice is demonstrated when librarians and teachers work together, enabling students to achieve higher levels of literacy, reading, learning and problem solving as well as information and communication technology skills. It recommends that School library services must be provided equally to all members of the school community regardless of age, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, professional or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those who are unable to use mainstream library services and materials and that access to services and collections should be based on the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights and Freedoms, and should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, or to commercial pressures.

The Manifesto also refers to the authorities responsible for funding. It maintains that the

*school library is essential to every long-term strategy for literacy, education, information provision and economic, social and cultural development. As the responsibility of local, regional and national authorities, it must be supported by specific legislation and policies. It must have adequate and sustained funding for trained staff, materials, technologies and facilities, and it shall be free of charge* (UNESCO 2000).

Key objectives are identified by the Manifesto in relation to the goals of the school library, including proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in democracy; that access is provided to local, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions; and that educational goals as outlined in the school's mission and curriculum are supported and enhanced.

According to Khan (2009) 21<sup>st</sup> century libraries represent a dramatic shift from the libraries that preceded them. He describes the philosophical shift in library space and function in the building of new libraries and reminds the reader that where originally libraries once focused on print holdings at the primary medium of interaction between the library and its patrons (libraries as temples of knowledge, and quiet solitary activity), they now hold a wide range of materials in a range of forms. He notes

*Libraries today are facing the dual challenge of accommodating rapidly changing populations, and keeping pace with information and communication technology (ICT)* (Khan 2009:1).

Khan (2009:3) proposes four main types of libraries: national, public, academic professional and special libraries but interestingly does not include school libraries in his typography, even though they form the largest group of libraries in most countries, and share the same features as other categories of libraries - and in Britain have been undergoing redevelopment or being rebuilt as modern academies as part of the Building Schools for the Future project (DfES 2003).

The 21<sup>st</sup> century library service is examined by Gildersleves (2006) who comments on the rapid change experienced by children's and youth library services driven by political concerns over national literacy levels and education problems. Attention is drawn to the way that public children's libraries have evolved to encourage extended families and child minders and schools to use the library with children, and how the services that they offer can be extended to schools to supplement their own school libraries. Of particular interest is the focus on and contribution of public school libraries where a more practical way of supporting shared family reading and literacy would be through the development of the school library which the child attends. Not only is the school a familiar place to both family and child but the school library is a school resource that can be used with confidence by families. Importantly literacy within a school library context can be supported by specialists in the form of school librarians and teachers to develop family and child reading in relation to the school curriculum and for leisure. In this respect it could be proposed that school libraries as part of schools should be seen as the key source for addressing issues related to national literacy levels rather than those provided by public library services.

In the United States, '*The National Library Power*' (1999) presents a plan of action introduced to improve opportunities through enhanced use of improved library media centers aimed at developing the students' learning skills by helping them become information literate. Although the policy of delegating more powers to libraries developed in the 1990s, it has been at the heart of the school library media services since the publication of *Information Power* in 1988. The National Library Power, a ten-year initiative of the DeWitt Wallace-Reader Digest fund (one of the largest publishers and supporters of school libraries in the USA), put these ideas to the test in 700 schools serving more than 1 million students in deprived communities around the country (Wheelock in Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock 2001:2).

The National Library Power's vision for school librarianship, that of ensuring that all learners in the school, adults and children alike, have the resources and support they need in order to become effective users of information and ideas, is one that has become embedded in school library policies. Puriefoy and Walker make the important point that where librarians build this vision into school library policies, they increase their

credibility as educators helping to break away from the stereotype of librarians as keepers of books (Puriefoy and Walker in Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock, 2001).

### **2.3 The Role of the school library and its contribution to reader development**

Increasingly teachers and other educationalists have begun to recognize that learning can take place outside of the classroom and that independent learning guided by the interests of the student makes a valuable contribution to students' learning. The shift is away from formal teacher-led didactic teaching and passive learning to teaching and learning where there is greater student involvement and the role of the student is that of an active self-directed learner. The school library and the school librarian have the opportunity to play a key role in providing opportunities which support independent learning that not only follows the interests and needs of the student, but developing reading, research and study skills that also support the curriculum.

School librarians have the potential to play a key role in reader development, enabling students to develop positive reader identities that help them to access the school curriculum and that helps them to understand both themselves and the world around them. Reading as a skill supports independent lifelong learning, enabling students to read for pleasure or for content, accessing information, stories and experiences. According to MORI (2003) teenagers read because it makes them feel good; it provides stress relief and lets them use their imagination and is creative.

Levitov makes a case for the important contribution of the school library both in providing access and specialist support, stating

*For students' reading skills to improve, they need to read. They need to have lots of access to books and technology. They need to feel comfortable around books, talk about books, and associate books with positive interactions. They need the support of librarians who can match them up with the right books, bring guest authors into the school, create book clubs, help them access electronic books, guide them to online book discussions ... (Levitov 2010:4).*

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2002) placed young people in the UK seventh overall with good functional literacy skills, whilst noting the underachievement of those with reading difficulties. It noted however, that the UK scored very poorly in positive attitudes towards reading for pleasure

(Armstrong, 2004:10). Tilke (2002:169) highlights the importance of the librarian's concern for, and contribution to boys' reading abilities and motivation, liaising with departments and specialists, providing relevant resources to support specific needs.

School libraries are the one place in the school that is dedicated to literacy, the book and the written and spoken word, whether presented on paper or the internet and where librarians share their enthusiasm for reading. Barrett and Douglas make the important point that

*The school librarian is uniquely equipped to promote reading within the school. As a book and reading expert the librarian can deploy knowledge and instill enthusiasm* (Barrett and Douglas 2004:3).

The library has always had a significant role in supporting reading and literacy, as well as helping to develop pupils' independent learning, and the OECD (2002) report that literacy is one of the most effective ways of bringing about social change.

The School Library Association report the OECD findings from 31 countries, pointing out that research shows that a love of reading (whether in the form of books, comics, newspapers or magazines) is more important for academic success than a family's income or class (Armstrong 2004:6).

Streatfield et al make an important point related to the impact of the school librarian on the contribution of the school library and the way in which it is perceived by the school community:

*The character and contribution of the school library is fundamentally established by the school librarian, working in the context set by the Senior Leadership Team and hopefully mirroring the ethos and best practices of the school. What (s)he does to promote literacy and reading for pleasure, to develop information literacy, to engage with e-learning, to collaborate with teachers, and to help students to develop as learners and as people can make a major contribution to the school... (Streatfield et al. 2010:2).*

The role of the librarian, as Streatfield points out, is central to reader development, a point supported by Barrett and Douglas (2004: 48) who note that,

*There is clear evidence that reader development and the active involvement of the school librarian raise educational attainment and that a love of reading is more important in determining academic achievement than social background* (Barrett and Douglas 2004:48).

The school librarian is in a position to make a positive contribution through helping to create a whole school reading culture, with the school library at its centre through both the development of the individual reader and through the range of activities and events that the library promotes, specifically promoting reading

*As a creative rather than passive activity, and opening up books is the most powerful thing that can be done to create a school reading culture among staff and students. Sharing activities can generate a huge interest in reading* (Barrett and Douglas 2004:51).

The school librarian plays a central role in creating an environment and culture that encourages reading and literacy. Armstrong draws attention to the criteria used by Ofsted when inspecting school library provision, providing a clear direction for the development of a reading culture and reader development:

*1. Enjoyment of fiction at all ages- wide reading, range of genres, challenge and progression, a reading culture among pupils.*

*Key points to look for: level of resourcing, accessibility, and guidance or recommendation as to what to read;*

*2. Reading skills and appropriate progress in these- range of strategies, assessment and recording, intervention for those needing a boost.*

*Key points to look for: readability of materials, study support, impact of reading buddies, catch-up programmes* (Armstrong 2004:8).

The school inspection body for England, Ofsted, carried out an investigative study into what a good librarian contributes to their schools and reported that many schools made increasingly good use of reading groups for pupils and that some librarians also provided specific support for pupils' reading such as through the Reading Challenge materials or in a paired reading programme (OFSTED, 2006:13). These activities were reported as important in supporting reading, and also highlighted the skills and impact of good school librarians in supporting students' reading.

The school librarian's contribution to learning is not restricted only to reader development in a library context. Irving has stressed the importance of linking the provision of school policy with curriculum plans in an interactive manner, so that the

two go hand in hand. She has argued that the quality of the collection is essential in supporting the curriculum and for this reason librarians should be involved in Heads of Department meetings and other curriculum development sessions, in order for them to have a clear overview of what resources will be needed to support teaching and learning (Irving, 1996).

CILIP recommend a range of activities that school librarians can organize in order to generate reader interest and to help create a reading culture, including: organizing reading groups; poetry readings, performances and storytelling sessions; author visits or live ready events; book debates; ‘top ten’ displays; buddy schemes that involve shared reading; displays of students’ comments and book chains using comments/feedback cards for the next reader to add their comments (Barrett and Douglas, 2004:51). Planning original and interesting activities that motivate students and encourage them into using the school library is vital, therefore promoting the school library needs to be taken seriously if it is to draw students and teachers in as users.

The marketing of the library is an important aspect that needs to be considered in relation to the collection, space and access especially where the school library has to fight for limited resources. A school library cannot have exciting promotional material that draws students in only for them to find that the collection on offer is old and limited in range, or the library itself is an uncomfortable, poorly lit space. Referring to marketing concepts and theories (e.g. de Saez 2002, Pettinger 1997, Baines, Fill and Page 2011) the library must therefore consider its position within the school and the wider student and family community in order to identify and develop services and activities, and to consider the most effective way of engaging in promotion.

As information specialists, librarians have an excellent opportunity to empower students, parents, and classroom teachers with the knowledge and skills needed for life in the 21st century (Brown, 2005). They have never had a better opportunity for implementing what they know and do best – serving others through the use of information technologies. School librarians are able to make a whole school contribution, promoting literacy and engaging in main school activities, working with teachers in the classroom or library and organizing resources including e-resources to

support the development of literacy and the promotion of reading (Streatfield *et al.* 2010:10).

## 2.4 Information Literacy

This section discusses the importance of information literacy in its widest sense and explores the school librarian's role in developing young learners and the fundamental skills of information literacy as a tool for accessing information. It is recognized that students will use the internet as their preferred tool of information-seeking and research (Crawford and Irving, 2007). Williams and Wavell acknowledge this, reporting:

*While the need to be able to find, critically evaluate and apply information in learning and problem solving is not new, the significance has increasingly been recognized in the context of ICT. The introduction of ICT in workplace, home and education has made information readily accessible but has also highlighted the significance of issues of quality, relevance and reliability of information, as well as the value of being able to deal effectively with the quantity of information and sources available* (Williams and Wavell 2007:200).

The definition of information literacy proposed by the UNESCO Information for All (IFAP) Project involves the

- *recognition when information is needed;*
- *identification of the needed Information;*
- *identification of the sources, to locate and access information efficiently and effectively, to evaluate information critically;*
- *organization and integration of information into existing knowledge, to use information ethically and legally, to communicate information , and carry out all of the above activities effectively.*

(UNESCO 2006:4-5).

The definition of Information Literacy skills is extended by Dickinson and Mardis in their discussion of the *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* and whilst confirming that school libraries are essential to the development of information literacy skills and tools, they propose that the aim of information literacy skills is to enable students to:

- *inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge;*
- *draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations,*
- *and create new knowledge;*
- *share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society; and*

- *pursue personal and aesthetic growth.*  
(Dickinson and Mardis 2009:2).

Kuhlthau (2003) shares the view of authors such as Branch and Solowan (2003) and Abilocok (2004) that students should develop their learning skills to cope with the growing technological advancement and the increased use of ‘inquiry-based learning’ approaches in schools. They share the idea that education requires teachers and librarians in planning, teaching and evaluating student learning across the curriculum and where the teacher is acknowledged as an expert in the curriculum and context, and a teacher-librarian as an expert in resources and processes especially in the use of strategies supporting students’ research and learning, skills which should be accessible to even the youngest children can learn to use these strategies throughout their early years of schooling.

According to Streatfield *et al.* (2010) 87% of UK qualified librarians are contributing to information literacy work in their school by such activities as planning and conducting lessons in the library or classroom, often jointly with teachers. However, it should be recognized that school librarians can only support the development of these objectives if they are given a central role within the school management. Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock (2001) reflected and commented upon the USA philosophy of ‘*Information Power: Building Partnership for Learning*’. They viewed it as new school structures, new materials or facilities, creating a wave of energy and purpose that provided everyone with a clear vision of a school library media programme based on using information. The notion of leadership, which was outlined in this school library agenda, proposes that everyone has a role to play within a model of collaborative leadership. It draws on the knowledge, skills and experience of many people to accomplish multiple and complex tasks and hopes to engage supporters from diverse areas in the school and larger community, focusing on creating a shared vision for the school library media programme. It also allows for reflection and continuous feedback on the implementation process and strategies.

Information Power therefore assumes a greater and key leadership role for the school library media specialists. As an Information Power leader, the school library media specialist should provide leadership through professional knowledge and expertise,

initiate and sustain communication with teachers, administrators and parents with regards to all aspects of Information Power. It also assumes that the school library media specialist should reach out for all members of the school community and get them involved in the school library programme. In addition, Information Power states that this leadership role entails providing students and teachers with information literacy skills and showing them how these skills are integral part of learning in all areas of the curriculum.

This definition is important in that it covers not only information retrieval, but also the recognition of appropriate information and the ability to make judgments about its appropriateness. The ability to carry out these tasks is dependent on literacy itself, and the librarian plays a central role in enabling students to achieve the learner independence advocated by CILIP.

Eisenberg noted,

*In the past in education, there was a reliance on one primary information resource: the textbook. But this is rapidly changing due in large part to the explosion in information technology and networked information* (Eisenberg 2008:39).

Irving has stressed the importance of a coherent approach when developing a whole school policy by relating information skills directly to personal teaching programmes and through focusing on assignments. School librarians have a key role in ensuring that all staff have a clear understanding of how their own teaching can influence, and be influenced by, the teaching of information skills, supporting individual teaching and the development of shared or integrated teaching through the whole curriculum. Irving stresses the value of librarians within a school in building a culture of student independent learning. For this to happen she argues that both librarians and teachers need to understand the pedagogy of learning to learn. Through partnership the librarian and teachers can give students the best environment, combining Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and classroom learning, and teaching approach to help students learn how to learn (Irving 1996).

Information literacy as the development of an approach to thinking and as a set of specific skills is connected to developments in understanding pedagogy and to

constructivist theories of teaching. These theories grew out of the work of Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner who each developed different interpretations of how children build up their knowledge and understanding from their involvement with experiences and ideas. Hohenstein and King (in Dillon and Maguire, 2007: chapter 13) highlight a number of principles emerging from constructivist theories, in particular that children's learning is influenced by how they use previous knowledge to construct new understanding, by how teachers and parents guide and 'scaffold' the child through learning by modelling and then stimulating the child's own experimenting and reflection on this and by challenging children to stretch themselves beyond the familiar. Hohenstein and King also note that current theories of learning emphasize the contribution of children's own motivation to learn and that "the more engaged the learners are with the material, the more they will advance their skills" (Hohenstein and King in Dillon and Maguire, 2007:166).

21<sup>st</sup> century pedagogy theory also connects to the notion of personal learning styles, preferred learning strengths and key learning strategies. Dymoke (in Dymoke and Harrison, 2008: chapter 2) provides an overview of significant theories in this area, including Kolb's learning styles and cycle, Gardner's multiple intelligences and Buzan's mind mapping techniques. From this she highlights the importance of learning as a continuous, cyclic and reflective process, and the need to combine a variety of approaches to meet the different learning preferences of students. Dymoke also summarises how the notion of 'thinking skills' has developed. She notes particularly De Bono's 'thinking hats' approach getting students to use multiple perspectives to understand an issue, and Bloom's 'taxonomy of educational objectives' which tracked a hierarchy of thinking and learning experience from simple content identification and remembering through to complex evaluation of evidence and combination of idea. From these, Dymoke emphasizes the importance of students being able to understand how they learn as well as what they learn in order for them to become effective problem solvers able to transfer their skills into a variety of contexts. Dymoke labels this 'meta-cognition' (in Dymoke and Harrison, 2008:61).

A variety of handbooks on pedagogy aimed at supporting teacher training across the educational stages all emphasize these principles and the ultimate goal of enabling students to be reflective and engaged learners, able to build on their own knowledge

and experience to solve problems (Dillon and Maguire, 2007; Dymoke and Harrison, 2008; Petty, 2009; Gray et al., 2005a). The textbooks note the importance of developing thinking skills within subject contexts and transferable across contexts. These ‘thinking skills’ closely map to what librarians call ‘information literacy’ and ‘research skills’. From this it would seem likely that teachers and school principals would all recognize the importance of information literacy and be actively teaching and developing these skills in students.

Ofsted as part of their investigation into effective school libraries, reported on the way in which libraries were often underused and lost opportunities for influencing learning, stating,

*In some schools, while all pupils were timetabled to use the computer suite for regular, targeted teaching of ICT, the library was not used in the same way for developing information literacy systematically. The survey found that too many library lessons in primary schools concentrated largely on the simple exchange of books; this is especially likely to happen where the library is closed at lunchtime. In other schools, library lessons take place, but there is a lack of overall rationale or coherent planning* (Ofsted 2006:19).

In addition, Ofsted visits confirmed the important role of libraries in pupils’ personal development. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils using the library for independent work, showing a capacity for initiative and problem-solving. They reported that in general, however, there were too few opportunities for pupils to carry out research or work independently. Schools did not think carefully enough about the skills pupils would need to continue with their studies beyond school, either in further and higher education or in the workplace, and that stronger provision needed to be made for independent research and learning.

Crawford and Irving note that a report by HM Inspectors of Education in Scotland (HMIe, 2005) on the Integration of Information and Communication Technology identified that,

*Few schools had systematic approaches to developing information literacy to ensure that all pupils acquired this set of skills progressively as part of their passport of core and life skills* (Crawford and Irving, 2007:21).

They added that effort should be made to enable students to acquire ICT and information literacy skills that would advantage them both for the world of work and for tertiary education.

In their interviews with seven subject/academic librarians from Glasgow Strathclyde and Glasgow Caledonian Universities, Crawford and Irving concluded that the level of skills varied depending on the student, the course and the school they came from plus home life. Skills are generally limited or poor in the following areas:

- *knowing the different types of information; where information comes from; how it is generated, published and how to use it;*
- *search strategies, searching in depth or beyond what's available;*
- *evaluating information found plus critical thinking.*

(Crawford and Irving 2007:20).

These findings concur with other research in this area (Andretta 2005; Rowlands et al. 2008) confirming that information literacy skills should begin at school, preferably in the early years.

There are implications for students wanting to progress to higher education where there is a heavy reliance on information literacy skill for students' understanding, accessing and supporting the curriculum of the subject being studied, if students have not been taught or acquired information literacy skills in a systematic way. This is exemplified in the findings of Crawford and Irving who used focus group interviews to research sixth-form students who had applied to go to university to study a range of disciplines, finding the following:

- *information literacy skills were generally taught in first and second year (aged 12–13) but not subsequently;*
- *reinforced within the curriculum resulting in fragmented levels of knowledge and usage for their remaining years at school;*
- *pupils were also learning from fellow pupils, teachers, the librarian or parents, family and friends;*
- *the indication was that the higher levels of skills were developed through personal interest and subject/ teacher related;*
- *books and the Internet were their main sources of information with one pupil seeing Google as their friend with a success rate of 98 per cent*

(Crawford and Irving 2007:20).

Information literacy plays a key part in enabling students to access information and according to CILIP, the school librarian has an important role in assisting learners to use IT skills to find information and to use it safely. Douglas and Wilkinson report that access to information is common and used by everybody, noting that

*Technology promotes access to information for every purpose and in every setting. In this digital age information skills paired with literacy skills are vital.... As the hub of information flows within the school, the school library needs to be a central player in making pupils information literate*  
(Douglas and Wilkinson 2010:5).

The idea of knowing how to find information and understand the structures used to organize it is important for all learners, but the rise of the Internet often means that it is the first place that students will turn to in searching for information. Understanding how to access and use web based information responsibly and to avoid plagiarism is an essential aspect for using the internet for research (Royce, 2011). Students, whether at school or university, search the Internet for data and information when required to carry out research for assignments and to communicate with one another. According to Herring and Tarter (2007), reporting on a small-scale study, some 60% of 12-13 year olds working on a physics essay preferred to use websites for their information, whilst just 10% favoured books. Certainly the nature of the topic focus contributes to the suitability of internet- or book-based investigation, but the school librarian can enable both students and staff to balance the use of different source media when researching. Likewise, the librarian can play a key role in helping them to learn to access digital resources and to use and understand cyber-information responsibly, (Dubber 1999; Dubber, 2002; Dubber 2005).

A creative strategy reported by Lonsdale and Armstrong, aimed at generating reader interest amongst older students, is that of university-school collaboration. Lonsdale and Armstrong examine the role of the university library in supporting information literacy in UK secondary schools, seeking to ensure that students coming to university are able to use library facilities and databases in their learning when at university. Benefits of collaboration were seen to:

- *facilitate enhanced performance in the school;*

- *familiarise pupils with teaching and learning methods adopted in tertiary education;*
- *expose pupils to large resources of the university sector;*
- *encourage pupils into tertiary education;*
- *ease the psychological stress of moving from secondary education to tertiary education; and*
- *offer pupils entering tertiary education a more level playing field if some instruction in the use of e-resources were done in school*

(Lonsdale and Armstrong 2006:567).

This is a relevant consideration for schools in preparing students for higher education, when research into university student achievement at Huddersfield University has shown that there is a correlation between amount and quality of library resource use by students and their final degree score (Goodall and Pattern 2011).

Becta (2010:3) in their guidance on 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching, proposed that technology creates opportunities for teaching, assessment, planning and administration, and that research has shown that it can help to motivate learners, raise standards, personalise learning in addition to enabling staff to save time and widening access to parents and hard to reach groups. Streatfield reports that a growing number of library staff are actively engaging with ICT to make e-resources available and help develop e-learning platforms to support teaching and learning throughout the school: 47% are actively contributing to the school website, Intranet or VLE and (20.4%) are helping to manage (or are managing) the website, intranet or VLE in addition to creating a range of on-line lessons and resources for a wide range of subjects (Streatfield *et al.* 2010:20).

## **2.5 Guidelines, advice and policy development for school libraries**

A key source of information regarding library standards, guidance, policy and practice world-wide is from professional bodies such as the International Association of School Librarians (IASL) and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA); these enable comparison and support across different countries. It is worth noting that IFLA undertakes to translate their advice and guidelines into various languages, including Arabic. National professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in the United Kingdom, or

the American Library Association (ALA) publish a range of guidelines, professional literature and support material, via their publication divisions and their websites, covering creation and management of the collection, accommodation, use of resources, management, funding, staffing, ICT, information skills, evaluation and inspection and health and safety, data protection, copyright legislation (Cornish, 2009; Pedley, 2012), contracts and licensing arrangements (eg Tilke, 1998b; Corrall and Brewerton, 1999; Totterdell, 2001,) and offer further current perspectives and case studies through journals. Additionally professional bodies commission works from acknowledged experts in the field, contributing ideas and sharing experience. Markless et al. (2009) offer both advice and best practice on key aspects of school library management within the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century school and importantly preface their advice and guidance with an examination of the concept of the professionalism of the school librarian, the value of which is to support the school librarian in re-thinking through their values, the way they see their role, the way it is carried out and their contribution to their school. They move the school librarian away from a role defined by sets of policies and procedures to asking questions that form the basis of their professionalism as a school librarian, including:

*What is our view of professionalism in the school library?*

*What should it encompass? If we want to raise our profile we need to develop a vision on: which issues will we not compromise?*

*What is it that we are prepared to fight for which reflects the core values of our professionalism? (Markless et al, 2009:16).*

Specialist focus sub-groups of these bodies, such as the School Libraries Group of CILIP or the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), part of the American Library Association, provide advice and literature set within the relevant national educational context. In particular the ASSL produce the series *School Library Improvement*, on different aspects of developing the school library. Examples include human resources and the importance of qualified staff who are regarded as other school professionals with the authority to manage children's behavior in the library, aware of health and safety issues within the school library and subject to performance management (Barratt and Douglas 2004:16-17); copyright issues within a school context (Norman, 2004). Furthermore, in the United Kingdom the independent charitable organization the School Library Association (SLA) regularly publishes short,

easy-to-use practitioner guides on a wide range of aspects of school library management, from collection development and budgeting to teaching information skills and reader development. Of particular usefulness for policy is the SLA advice on 'Framework for creating a library policy' and 'Seven steps for library planning and policy making' (Harrison, 2001:24-28). These provide key questions that enable a school librarian to construct a coherent policy that encompasses purpose and aims in addition to accommodation, learning resources, management and staffing and curriculum support and stages for review and planning.

This body of published practice-based literature and guidance demonstrates the complexity of the challenge of delivering effective, professional library services which support student learning and deliver on school priorities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As student learning approaches evolve (especially to include electronic resources and the Internet) and the range of resources available and activities in which school libraries are involved increases, it becomes increasingly important for librarians to have access to information, ideas and practice and to be feel confident in having expertise that may be called on to support the work of other staff in the school in supporting student learning, even if they are solo practitioners within schools. Membership of a professional body such as CILIP and AASL enable school librarians to access a growing quantity of literature which offers advice and shares fellow practitioner experience, provides opportunities for networking. Professional periodicals and journals such as *Teacher Librarian* (Scarecrow Press); *Knowledge Quest* (ALA); *School Library Monthly* (Libraries Unlimited); *CILIP Update* (CILIP) enable school librarians to be part of an extended professional support network which ranges from local to international. AASL and CILIP both offer school library advocacy resources (for example the School Library Programs Improves Student Learning series (AASL, 2011) targeting a range of audiences including policy makers and parents. Opportunities for school librarians to stay up to date are provided by CILIP through their resource list of links to school library research including that of school library advocacy, for example the National Survey of School Libraries (2010).

The AASL supports a wiki of essential links for school librarians, contributed by members, covering topics ranging from intellectual freedom to professional periodicals through to standards and guidelines and school librarian as a career. Useful material

from other bodies that are not specifically library-focused, provide an important foundation and support for school librarians. Included within this in the United Kingdom are material and literature from the National Literacy Trust, Book Trust and the Centre for Primary Literacy (CLPE) enabling librarians to develop their own professional involvement with students and the support of colleagues and the school curriculum, specifically literacy through the curriculum.

In the United Kingdom historically support has also been provided by School Library Support Services (SLS) run at local authority level, and providing resources, advice and training in all aspects of school library management and development. The key role of such centrally administered school library service in supporting primary schools is made by Douglas and Wilkinson (2010:9). They cite examples of how school library services could provide valuable support in advising primary school libraries which may be poorly located, badly organized and inadequately resourced and little teacher expertise in library organization. Even if such libraries are not suffering from these problems, because primary schools are generally much smaller than their secondary counterparts, the same level of budget and economies of scale are not available to them and a SLS can help to overcome this imbalance at an educational phase which is critical to children's reading and information skills development.

However, this system in the UK has eroded over time, falling victim to budget cuts and changing priorities of school principals. Eyre makes an important point in regard to the changes in the School Library Service (SLS), one that affects both collections and the students' learning.

*Delegated SLS need to sell their services to those schools who are willing and able to buy. It is the richer and larger schools who are able to do so, the ones who are also able to afford to put books on the school library shelves. What therefore happens to those individual children in the 'sink' schools who cannot afford to buy? What also happens to those children in the schools within authorities where the SLS failed to operate commercially and therefore disappeared? The SLS is no longer there to fall back upon and to redress the shortfall (Eyre, 2000:42).*

The recommendation of the United Kingdom Library Association (predecessor to CILIP) was that:

- i. Each [school] library develops a policy for its library;*
- ii. A development plan for the school library, with supporting action plan, is adopted;*
- iii. An effective library steering committee is used to facilitate the development of a policy and development plan;*
- iv. The library and its manager are fully included in any programme of appraisal and evaluation in the institution (Tilke, 1998a:24).*

Creating an effective school library policy is essential in helping to establish the purpose and function (academic and otherwise) of the school library (Tilke, 2002: 84; Harrison 2001:24-28; Barrett and Douglas 2004:91-92). Professionally defined standards such as that from the SLA and Scottish HMIe framework for school library evaluation can act as a framework against which the school librarian can evaluate their library provision, helping them to set targets for improvement (Scott, 2001:6-9; Barrett and Douglas 2004:68-69). Corrall and Brewerton, in advising new professionals, offer both strategic and specific guidance providing a starting point for good practice in library management which may usefully be considered by school librarians. In particular, with reference to service development and management, they urge librarians to take account of three important principles:

- i. Kipling's six honest serving men, always starting with Why – if you cannot answer that, do not do it (p.xi) which requires the school librarian to be able to justify and explain their practice through being able to answer the key questions: What, Why, When, How, Where and Who;*
- ii. The use of objectives and strategy to provide a basis to planning, evaluation and professional development in order to manage change successfully;*
- iii. The SEPTEMBER formula which guides librarians to consider the role of: society, economic, political, technological, educational, marketing, business, ethical and regulatory aspects in their decision making*

(Corrall and Brewerton 1999:4).

The literature makes it clear that school library policy needs to be seen as a management tool that defines the function of the library, is up to date, relevant and set within the context of the school's vision and mission statement, the school development plan and

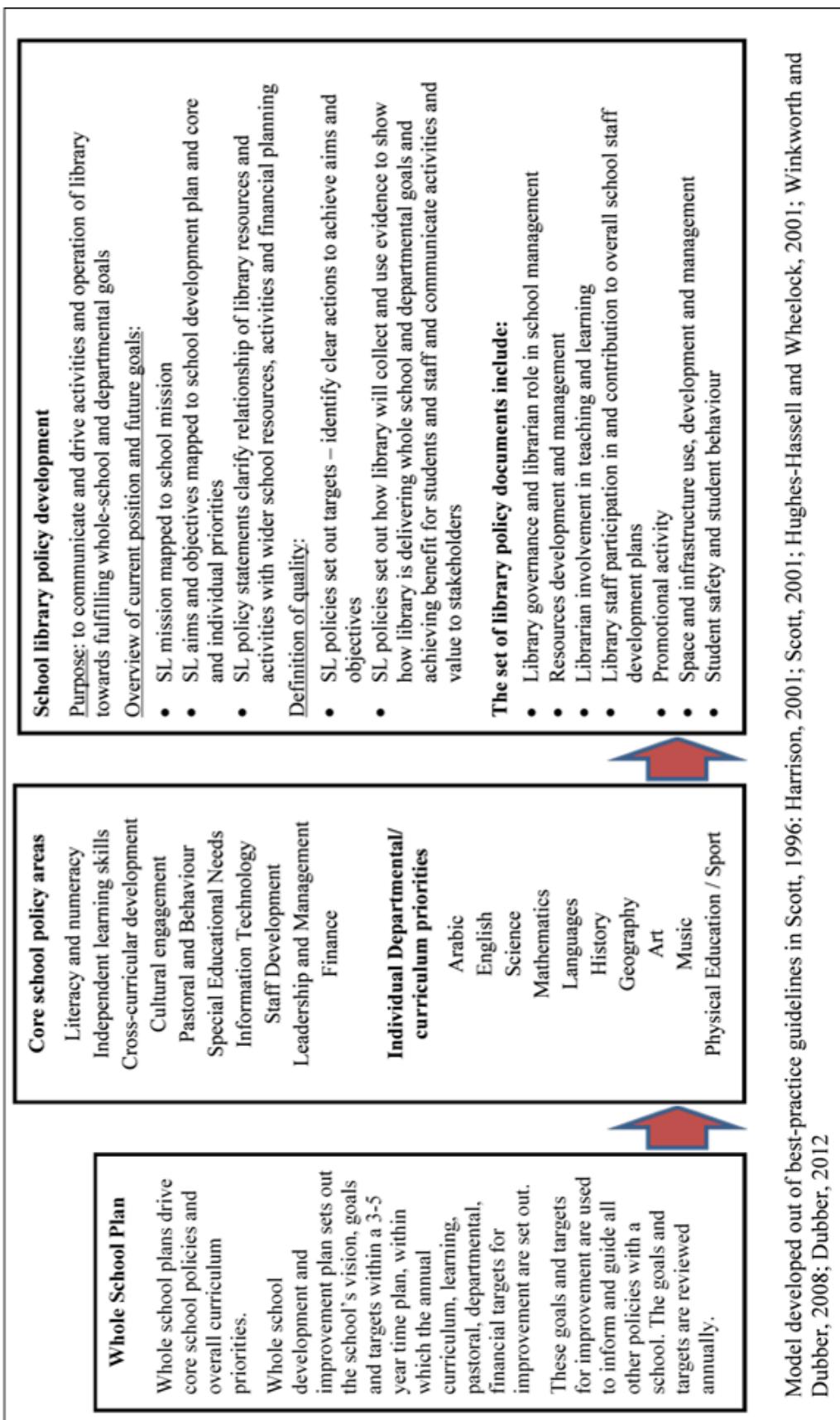
is grounded in educational practice (Bryson 1999; Bryson 2011; Tilke 1998b). In this way the policy sets out why the library exists, its function and for whom it exists and in doing so, it defines the role of the school library. In addition to using guidance from professional organizations to create library policy, Tilke (1998b; 2002) recommends that library policy is set within the context of the school's vision and wider school policies. He makes a very important point:

*A realistic and useful policy statement will have been developed through the consultation, collaboration and most importantly will have received the full agreement of the teaching staff. Indeed, this is regarded as an essential part of the policy development process* (Tilke 1998b:21).

The message emerging from the literature is that since the library is a central school resource, the library policy itself should be of interest to, and involve the contribution of other members of staff, for example through a library steering committee and be recognized by the whole school as a statement of that central resource to all. In addition school librarians themselves should be aware of school-wide policies such as literacy, information skills and behaviour management and of how the library fits into and enables achievement of these. It is worth noting that although the advice is that the school library is seen as a central school resource, the library may also be seen as resource in terms of a space for “non-library” activity, such as meetings, interviews, examinations or inspection office space.

Further, specific aspects such as student involvement need to be accounted for in school library policy through statements about for example students' behaviour (Barrett and Douglas, 2004:16-17) especially where the school uses the library for purposes other than academic, for example, pupils being sent to the library for disruptive behaviour or detention, ‘wet break’ or other non-library related activities (Tilke, 1998b:149). In summary, the school library policy is a management tool that is set within the context of a school's vision and mission statement, the school development plan and annual targets; it is grounded in educational practice and provides a basis for service evaluation school values and goals. The school library policy should reflect these goals and targets and in addition sets out why the library exists, its function and how it supports students' learning and the wider school community.

It is set within the context of a school's vision and mission statement and the school development plan; it is grounded in educational practice and provides a basis for service evaluation. From the overarching library policy it is then possible to develop a complementary set of dependent policies covering the range of service areas involved in enabling student learning and development. Key points highlighted by authors are the importance of stakeholder involvement and ensuring that policies are regularly reviewed in the light of ongoing school priorities (Barrett and Douglas, 2004), the wider educational context and the relationship between school, students and their families so that they may adapt to new needs and remain relevant to the overall school focus.



**Figure 2.1:** Strategic development from Whole School Policy to School Library

## **2.6 Library management**

The school librarian holds a management responsibility for the library in the same way that any other curriculum or resource manager has within a school, and as such is part of the wider management of the school (Tilke, 2002; Barrett and Douglas, 2004). As with any other manager understanding of both the wider school context and the internal functioning of the department are essential. An understanding of how the school library fits into the working practice of the school in terms of vision, policies, structure, administration, curriculum, partnerships, resources, inspection and the law sets the library in context. The internal functioning and running of the school library include both leadership and management aspects. Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock highlight this *Information Power* leadership role where the library media specialist provides leadership to the school through their knowledge and expertise; demonstrates the ability to initiate and sustain communication with staff and parents; takes a lead in training students and staff in information literacy; works collaboratively with teachers to develop the curriculum and incorporate information literacy skills. They make an important observation that making the transition from traditional librarian to collaborative leader is not always easy, and that leading is not about power and control but about the ability '*to influence people to work willingly for group goals*' (Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock 2001:5).

These aspects, which Tilke (2002) supports, address both the educational function as well as the managerial role of the school librarian. The educational role of the school library defines its function and its contribution to the school and as a result the issue of who exactly manages the school library and what qualification they hold and the way they see their role is important to the way the library functions. The issue of the librarian's qualification (discussed more fully in 2.12) is important since it implies a level of professional expertise that enables the librarian to manage and lead the school library in an appropriate way, contributing to the development of wider school goals of students' reading and information literacy. The reality of the situation in the United Kingdom is that there is no legal requirement for professionally qualified school librarians in England and Wales (Gildersleaves 2006; Turner et al., 2007:214) and overall there is a shortage of qualified chartered librarians in schools. It is important to acknowledge that school library staffing may be restricted to the named school librarian

and possibly one or two part time staff who may have varying degrees of professional training and expertise. Although Tilke argues the preference for suitably qualified staff he acknowledges that a more pragmatic view is needed: a qualified librarian should ideally manage the school library and in the absence of a qualified librarian, a non-professional library assistant could carry out the basics of the job. Importantly the person providing this librarian role should possess a range of competencies, skills, knowledge and experience to fulfill the role effectively, and be well supported by the school management. Streatfield *et al.* highlights school management support of the librarian, reporting,

*Who the school librarian reports to can be viewed as an indicator of how the school views its library* (Streatfield *et al.* 2010:8)

This important aspect according to their survey of 762 secondary schools, 177 independent schools, 31 middle schools 17 academies and 57 who did not identify their school type, ranges from 38.8% reporting to a Head or Deputy Head; 26% to an Assistant Head, through to 13.7% reporting to a curriculum leader, 10% reporting to the school finance manager and in 11.4% of the cases the relatively low status was signaled by the librarian reporting to someone who is not part of the school leadership team. Access to the line manager differed between qualified librarians where 32.4% reported to having regular meetings and unqualified staff where 14.2% reported having regular meetings. Of those designated as library managers 21% reported that access to their library manager was infrequent. Feedback about performance mirrored this mixed experience with 39.1% having received positive general feedback, 34.1% reporting various levels of “inconsistent support or indifference from senior management, ranging from being largely ignored (29.2%) to receiving negative feedback”.

The key point to make here is that the school librarian may or may not be professionally qualified which may, especially if they are inadequately supported by the school management, impact on the quality of service and support that the school library is able to offer to students and staff. This point about the importance of suitable qualifications and expertise comes out strongly from the various school library impact studies conducted in America, reported in School Libraries Work! (NCLIS, 2008).

In terms of the management skills needed to run an effective school library, Tilke (2002:7) identifies the ability to account and plan for the use of funding; develop good relationships with staff and students; manage resources and contribute to assessment and evaluation within a wider school context. Barrett and Douglas (2004: 12) offer more specific guidance that includes: financial planning and budget management; human resource and professional development of staff; behaviour management; management of ICT; development planning; facilities and resources management; marketing; evaluation and partnership management. In contrast to both Tilke and Barrett and Douglas, the key management skills identified by independent secondary school library managers as essential to their role, were interestingly enough communication and information literacy (Turner *et al.* (2007:217). No mention was made to the management skills needed in terms of monitoring and evaluation, collection or budget management and only 3.9% of managers identified health and safety which is a legal requirement.

Creaser and Travis (2008) raise concerns about the primary schools in their survey noting that relatively few staff responsible for the school library collected any management data on their libraries such as the size of the stock, and many could not state the amount awarded for their library budget. Frameworks such as that developed by DfES (2004b) support the management of school libraries through different aspects of self evaluation. This self-evaluation toolkit sets out levels of practice (Table 2.2 below) in relation to the quality of leadership and management of the school library or ‘learning resource centre’ (LRC). This highlights the differences in strategic provision covering the management of the LRC itself, the LRC’s relationship to the wider school context and financial management of the delegated budget across five levels. This in turn links back to the strategic development relationship between whole school policy and library policy summarized in Figure 2.1 (above).

### Question 7a Level Descriptors ‘Leadership and Management of the LRC’

Level 1 Excellent	<p>The LRC manager leads and manages the LRC very well. The work of the LRC including its policy and planning documents, very closely reflect the aims and values of the school.</p> <p>The LRC contribution is clearly identified in the School Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Links between the headteacher and SMT and the LRC staff are mutually supportive and senior managers make a significant contribution to the LRC’s development. The governing body helps to shape the direction of the LRC and has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>The LRC manager is able to contribute highly effectively to the overall management of the school, including the selection and management of all learning resources, for example by his/her position in the school management structure and presence on all relevant whole school committees.</p> <p>He/she has great clarity of vision and purpose and communicates this effectively throughout the whole school. A brief and clear written vision statement is widely circulated to staff and pupils.</p> <p>Teaching staff and pupils have significant input into decisions about the development of the LRC, through an active LRC committee with representatives from all subject departments and other means, such as a pupil consultative committee and other informal liaison between teachers and LRC staff.</p> <p>Effective financial management of the delegated budget allows the LRC to achieve its priorities very well. Budget bids are very well prepared and based on very good evidence.</p>
Level 2 Good	<p>The LRC manager leads and manages the LRC well. The work of the LRC, including its policy and planning documents, closely reflects the aims and values of the school. Aspects of the LRC contribution are identified in the School Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Links between the headteacher and SMT and the LRC staff are mutually supportive and make a positive contribution to the LRC’s development. The governing body helps to shape the direction of the LRC and has an understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>The LRC manager is able to contribute effectively to the overall management of the school, including the selection and management of school-wide learning resources, for example by his/her position in the school management structure and presence on many relevant whole school committees.</p> <p>He/she has clarity of vision and purpose on most issues and communicates this through the whole school. A written vision statement is available to staff.</p> <p>Teaching staff and pupils have input into decisions about the development of the LRC, through an LRC committee which meets regularly, and other formal and informal liaison between teachers and LRC staff.</p> <p>Sound financial management of the delegated budget allows the LRC to achieve its priorities effectively. Budget bids are carefully prepared and argued based on good evidence.</p>
Level 3 Intermediate	<p>LRC manager leads and manages the LRC fairly well. The work of the LRC including its policy and planning documents, are generally based on the aims and values of the school.</p> <p>Aspects of the LRC contribution are mentioned in the School Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Links between the headteacher and SMT and the LRC staff are usually mutually supportive and senior management and the governing body make a contribution towards the LRC’s development</p> <p>The LRC manager is in a position to contribute to the overall management of the school, for example by his/her position in the school management structure and presence on relevant whole school committees. He/she has some input into the selection and management of school-wide learning resources.</p> <p>The LRC manager has some clarity of vision and purpose, especially on issues directly relating to the LRC.</p> <p>Teaching staff and pupils are consulted about the development of the LRC, formally, for example through an LRC committee/council as well as informally.</p> <p>Adequate financial management allows the LRC to achieve most of its priorities. Budget bids are carefully prepared and argued but evidence to support the bid is limited.</p>
Level 4 Emergent	<p>The LRC manager leads and manages the LRC adequately. Much of the work of the LRC, and some of its planning and policy documents, are loosely based on the aims and values of the school. The LRC is referred to in passing, in the School Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Links between the headteacher and SMT and the LRC staff are usually mutually supportive but contact is sporadic. The governing body makes an occasional contribution to the LRC’s development.</p> <p>The LRC manager is in a position to contribute to some extent to the overall management of the school, for example by being present on some relevant whole school committees.</p> <p>He/she can comment on the selection and management of school-wide learning resources.</p> <p>The LRC manager has some clarity of vision and purpose on issues directly relating to the LRC.</p> <p>Teaching staff and pupils are sometimes consulted about the development of the LRC, although this is usually informal.</p> <p>Basic financial management of the delegated budget allows the LRC to achieve some of its priorities. Budget bids are regularly submitted but evidence to support the bids is limited.</p>
Level 5 Needs Development	<p>The LRC manager does not lead and manage the LRC particularly well. Much of the work of the LRC is not specifically based on the aims and values of the school. The LRC is rarely referred to the School Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Links between the headteacher and SMT and the LRC staff are often poor. Senior managers and the governing body make little contribution to the LRC’s development and have a limited understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>The LRC manager is not in a position to be able to contribute to the overall management of the school, because he/she has no direct link to the school management structure and is not involved in relevant whole school committees.</p> <p>The LRC manager lacks clarity of vision and purpose.</p> <p>Teaching staff and pupils have little or no input into the development of the LRC.</p> <p>The financial management does not allow the LRC to achieve its priorities limited.</p>

**Figure 2.2:** Extract from Improve Your Library support booklet (DfES, 2004b)

The framework (Figure 2.2) provides very useful guidance for both the school librarian and the headteacher because it sets out the basic expectations of the relationship between the school library and the school, and could be used especially where practice has been defined as being between levels 3-5, to create an action plan to support improvement. This is particularly the case where staffing is minimal or where there is an absence of a current and accurate job description to provide direction on the management functions (Tilke, 2002:103), which support the school's policy and development plans. In particular, the DfES framework (above) notes that the school librarian has an important contribution into wider school management, a key role in connecting resources to student learning and significant financial responsibility.

## **2.7 Funding and budgetary control**

Funding is identified as central to the provision of a good school library that is learner centred, is managed by trained staff, and has an appropriate collection. Funding has a direct impact on the quality of the collection, staffing and the ability to support the learning of students. Tilke discusses the importance of a budget based on a formula to quantify and cost a school library budget to protect from budget cuts within schools. He identifies a number of methods of formulating this budget, most related to collection development. The Australia School Library Association guidelines propose a foundation collection, with a sliding scale of recommended items per student and a recommendation that 10% of items should be replaced annually. In contrast, UK resourcing is based on a formula of 13 items per child to reflect the school curriculum, with a recommended 20% increase built in to give a 'stock figure of 15.6% per pupil' in the UK (Tilke 2002:122). However, although the recommended spending figures for reading books had, in 2008, been calculated at £10 per pupil for primary schools and £14 for secondary schools, 61% of primary schools and 92% of secondary schools reported a library spend below this (Creaser and Travis (2008:29).

Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock for the AASL (2001:123) take a different approach, advocating curriculum mapping to inform a budget that reflects the needs and priorities set, with the warning to resist pressure to cut costs on books when funds are tight and to avoid fixed formulas dictating specific percentages of school library media funding to

be earmarked for books, magazines, or multimedia material to determine purchases. This challenge is likely to be even greater today with the addition of online subscription resources into the mix.

It is important however, in trying to balance the budget, not to lose sight of the school library user. Young makes the important observation that

*Everything in a library media program is for the benefit of the students, so any purchases made should be with student achievement in mind. The needs of the learner are identified and drive the content description for the budget* (Young, 2008:16).

In order to prepare and manage resources effectively and control spending, Barnett (1997) advocates the use of an annual budget cycle commencing with an audit of stock and an identification of current and expended demand, priorities and curriculum projects to help to set out a school library budget. Tilke (2002:127) reminds the librarian that identifying ‘value for money’ is an important aspect of managing spending, specifically through direct ordering and the use of suppliers and agents; use of subscription agents; keeping a library inventory; careful management of existing library furniture and resources, and use of the school library services resource collections. These allow the school librarian to demonstrate to school that the school library is value for money.

Adams (2007) raises concerns about the way that school budgets affect the librarian’s ability to buy appropriate books and resources for the collection which she says ultimately affect students’ intellectual freedom. She cites the ALA who makes the important point that school library media specialists assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and specialist knowledge.

However, she raises the issue of the effect of financial cuts on library staff, observing

*It is no secret that as school district financial resources shrink, administrators began to look for additional cuts in the school budget. Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB); “a highly qualified” teacher must be in every classroom, however, library media specialists are not included in that classroom designation (ALA Washington Office)* (Adams, 2007:30).

School library funding has been noted by Ofsted (2006) who have reported that funding for libraries varied markedly, even across the schools with good libraries. Their survey found a direct link between well funded libraries and effectiveness. However, gaps in resourcing were less significant overall than under-use or poor management.

The complex relationship between the book industry business, the trained librarian and the student are highlighted by Crandall. She reports on the impact of budget cuts in two key markets for children's publishers (public libraries and school libraries), on the publishing industry, observing,

*The Educational Publishers Council calculates that primary spending on school books is at its lowest level since 1996/1997, at £12.31 per head. Thirty-two per cent of UK primary schools spend less than £10 per head on books, and 47% of UK secondary schools spend less than £20 per head (Watson 2002). Thus, not only have book budgets declined, but the book industry can no longer rely on a cadre of trained professionals to intermediate between publisher and child, and to guide readers towards more challenging material* (Crandall, 2006:5).

The ALA, in their *State of America's Libraries* report (2010:16) identify a significant increase (19%) in the overall average of expenditure per school, from \$11,390 in 2009 to \$13,525 in 2010. However, at the 50th percentile, 75th percentile, and 95th percentile levels, there are only decreases compared with the previous year. In other words, a significant proportion of schools experienced a decrease in funding for information resources, and the averages in Table 2.2 may be deceiving in that they are affected by the very small percentage of schools that had significant increases.

	2007	2008	2009	2009 increase
All schools	\$11,169	\$11,390	\$13,525	+2,135 (19%)
All elementary schools	\$7,032	\$6,720	\$7,772	+1,052 (15.6%)
All Middle Schools	\$10,563	\$11,173	\$11,892	+719 (6.4%)
All High Schools	\$16,473	\$18,550	\$23,679	+5,129 (27.6%)

**Figure 2.3:** Average school library budgeting, 2007-2009 (ALA, 2010)

## **2.8 Collection management**

This section defines the terms ‘collection’ and ‘collection management’ and examines the implications for school libraries and librarians. These aspects are focused on the needs of the end users, which in the context of the school library are predominantly students but also include teachers, parent committees, governors and the wider school community. Decisions about the collection cannot be made without reference to the interests and curriculum needs of students and the school community; accessibility balanced by the issue of funding.

The modern school collection comprises both paper and digital resources. The Harrod’s Librarians’ Glossary (cited by Prytherch, 1995) in Edwards and Matthews (2000:142;145) defines the collection in terms of books or other library materials including manuscripts, pamphlets, art, photographs, maps and newspapers. To this IFLA (IFLA/UNESCO 2002 rev 2006) add music, computer games, magazines, video laser discs, and Douglas et al. (2002:10) include audio visual materials including CDs and DVDs, focused CD-ROM titles and web based learning packages. Kovacs and Elkordy discuss the contribution of electronic resources to the school collection noting the addition of electronic resources such as computerized bibliographic databases, full text databases, articles, books, reports, and multimedia (Kovacs and Elkordy, 2000: 339). This is an important aspect of collection building which schools must engage in as part of ensuring that students acquire the skills necessary for supporting learning and research both during their school life and into further and higher education.

The guidance governing the number of titles in a collection varies. IFLA (IFLA/UNESCO 2002 rev 2006) recommend ten books per student and although no numbers are given, recommend that the smallest school should have at least 2500 relevant and updated items to ensure a wide balanced book stock for all ages, abilities and backgrounds. They add that at least 60% of the stock should consist of curriculum-related non-fiction resources, together with a range of materials aimed at supporting the leisure interests of students.

The importance of having interesting and relevant titles in accessible formats is central to the development of reader development, connecting with the second PIRLS study

(Twist et al., 2007) which indicated a decline in reading linked to factors such as gender, time spent on video and computer games, watching TV and playing sport, and the findings of O'Sullivan and McGonigle (Power of Reading project) which highlights the central role played by schools particularly,

*the enthusiasm that teachers 'transmit' to children about books and reading. Our evidence demonstrates the role that carefully chosen texts play in enthusing and inspiring both teachers and children, particularly boys* (O'Sullivan and McGonigle 2010:58).

CILIP (Barrett and Douglas, 2004:36) provide more detailed guidance, recommending 13 items (to include both paper and digital resources) per student in the 11-16 age range, with an approximate 17 items for post-16 students. The recommended ratio of fiction to non-fiction is 1:4, or 1:5 depending on the priorities of the school library. The education regulations for school libraries in New York in contrast are prescriptive in terms of the number of titles that comprise a collection stating:

*For secondary schools in which the average daily attendance is fewer than 200 pupils, the library of a*

- (1) junior high school shall contain at least 1,000 titles;*
- (2) high school shall contain at least 1,000 titles; and*
- (3) junior-senior high school shall contain at least 2,000 titles.*

*The library of a secondary school in which the average daily attendance is more than 200 but fewer than 500 pupils shall contain at least 3,000 titles.*

*The library of a secondary school in which the average daily attendance is more than 500 but fewer than 1,000 shall contain at least 5,000 titles.*

*The library of a secondary school in which the average daily attendance is more than 1,000 pupils shall contain at least 8,000 titles.*

(NYSEd 2009: Section 91.1).

Although it is difficult to make a direct comparison, it is possible to conclude that a medium sized secondary school of between 500-1,000 students should have at least 5,000 titles according to New York Education Law or at least 13,000 titles according to CILIP, a large difference in terms of the collection available to support students' learning. These numbers are related to the number of curriculum subjects that students study, together with some allowance for leisure reading.

Andrade and Vergueiro (1996) cite Evans' (1987) model of collection development, the philosophy of which stresses the importance of knowing the library's community. This understanding enables the library collection to be built around their needs and interests. They base their collection development on Evans' guidance following five key aspects, identifying:

- (1) *responsibility for selection;*
- (2) *role of the Libraries Council in the selection and acquisitions process;*
- (3) *general criteria for the selection and acquisition of books, journals and other materials;*
- (4) *general criteria for the selection of donated and exchange materials;*
- (5) *general criteria for weeding*

(Andrade and Vergueiro, 1996:19).

Two important items not included in Evans' list are set out in the guidance for school libraries in New York (2009), and although discussed specifically in relation to e-library collections comply with Evans' philosophy of knowing the library's community. These are:

- Patron population: For whom will you be creating the [e-library] collection?
- Access: Intellectual level - what skills or knowledge will be expected from patrons in order to access the [e-library] collection?

It is acknowledged that the reference to the e-library collection reflects changes since Evans was publishing in 1987, in the way that students search for and access information as a result of the computers and the Internet, an area that will be explored in detail in a later section.

The collection building process is summarized by Johnson who identifies four steps:

*identifying the relevant items; assessing the item to decide if it is appropriate for the collection and evaluating its quality, deciding to purchase, and preparing the order* (Johnson 2009:136).

An important aspect that is implicit in the above phrase 'identifying the relevant items' is discussed by Sanacore who advocates that

*To ensure that the school library collection reflects children's interests and preferences, the children should be involved in building the collection. For this to happen, classroom teachers need to collect information about readers'*

*interests and preferences during the natural flow of literacy learning activities*  
(Sanacore 2006: 24).

Student involvement in collection development is a key aspect of creating a collection that meets the needs and interests of its users and enables the library population to have a direct involvement in their school library. Students can be involved on several levels with collection development, according to Farmer (2002:75) ranging from suggesting titles; reviewing books and sharing their opinions—in discussions, writing testimonials, and online, to forming an advisory library board or book club which consults with the wider student population. It is proposed that this enables librarians to provide a service that is meaningful to students. Farmer advises that

*By collaborating with young people throughout the collection development process, school librarians optimize resource use and fulfill their core mission “to ensure that students and staff are effective users of information and ideas”*  
(ALA 1998:6 in Farmer 2002:76).

This point is reinforced by the findings from the National Literacy Trust (Clark, 2010) which found that students were strongly motivated or demotivated to use the school library by how relevant or appealing they perceived the collection to be to their interests. However, consulting with those that are interested in what the library has to offer is one thing but as Crandall reports, selecting appropriate materials is not easy when students claim not to be interested, noting,

*A recent study commissioned by the Prince of Wales Arts and Kids Foundation, came up with similar findings. One thousand UK schoolchildren aged 7-14 were asked to list their 10 favourite activities. Almost one-half of them do not read books outside school. Instead, they prefer to watch television and play computer and video games. It is clear that, for readers and non-readers alike, entertainment choices have proliferated and the amount of time available for books has declined* (Crandall, 2006:7).

There is an issue which CILIP highlight which relates to Crandall's observation which is that a school might be tempted to respond to students' interest in accessing learning and information through digital or other media, by concluding that less money should be spent on print resources and the library as a whole. CILIP however observe that

*There is no evidence to suggest that the end of the book is in sight and the librarian must build a strong case for the continuing spend on books*  
(Barrett and Douglas 2004:19).

The school library budget allocated to the collection will clearly affect provision. In terms of the collection, today's school library media specialist (according to Keller, 2006:1) faces the important question of whether to purchase electronic or print subscription resources, but decisions need to be based on curriculum needs and requests by students and staff, computer access points and importantly, the library media centre budget.

Access to appropriate materials and greater responsiveness enable the school librarian to build a collection that is of interest and supports the learning of the wider school population. Majid commends the changes that the internet has brought to the collection-buying school librarian who was originally restricted to using print lists, publishers catalogues, flyers, and reviews for the identification of materials which were either inaccessible or expensive, noting,

*The rapid growth of online bookstores and websites has altogether changed this situation by providing tremendous opportunities for the identification, selection and acquisition of needed materials (Majid 2004:1-2).*

The AASL, reporting on a national survey of school library collections, noted that in spite of budget cuts, there was growth in collections:

*The average size of school library collections grew in the number of books, video and audio materials, and, most notably, in the average number of periodical subscriptions, which increased 29 percent from the previous year to 30.6 subscriptions, from 23.7 (AASL 2009:8).*

Average number of . . .	2007	2008	2009	2009 increase
Books	12,889	12,672	13,086	+412 (3.2%)
Periodical subscriptions	22.8	23.7	30.6	+6.9 (29.1%)
Video materials	445.9	471.7	495.6	+23.9 (5%)
Audio materials	86.3	89.9	98.4	+8.5 (9.5%)

**Figure 2.4:** Changes in school library holdings, 2007-2009 (AASL:2009:8)

This increase in providing periodical subscription access in school libraries is particularly interesting for the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the impact of the collection and the approach of the school library in developing research skills have a potential impact on students' library confidence beyond their time in school. The University of

Huddersfield research (White and Stone, 2010) shows that there is a correlation between university students' use of journals and library resources generally with their final grades.

Having a substantial collection is only relevant if library staff ensure that the collection is exciting and accessible whether physically or electronically to students and the wider school community. Maintaining and updating collections through a clear and structured approach to collection management is essential and are illustrated in the two examples below (Bellingham Public Schools, 2004; DfES 2004).

The terms 'Assess, Acquire, Maximize Access, Maintain' are used by Bellingham Public Schools in Washington to define their strategy for keeping collections alive and up to date. The handbook published in 'Managing Our Library Collections for Information Power' (Bellingham Public Schools, 2004) provides a detailed and thorough guidance for librarians ensuring that collections do not become out of date, in poor condition and underused. Auditing of resource provision through sampling the collection is presented as a useful strategy (Lemaire, 2001:5) as is collection mapping to ensure that the collection meets key criteria of breadth and depth and stock editing (Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock 2001:53-55).

Similarly, Question 4b in the self-evaluation toolkit for secondary school libraries and resource centres, asks libraries to consider the following questions in relation to how well the provision of the LRC resources meet the needs of the school's students and staff:

- i. *Are resources adequate in terms of quantity, range, quality, relevance, currency, condition and cultural relevance?*
- ii. *Reading materials: does the LRC provide access to a plentiful supply of material catering for all levels of reading ability and interest?*
- iii. *Are resources regularly weeded and updated to meet the needs of pupils and staff? Are resources well organized to meet the needs of pupils and staff?*
- iv. *Is effective use made of new technology?*
- v. *Is effective use made of outside agencies?*
- vi. *Are LRC resources adequately promoted throughout the school?*

(DfES 2004:22).

This raises the question of what is meant by use of 'outside agencies' (point v.) in relation to school library resources. Within the UK context, this is most likely to mean

School Library Support Services (SLS), business units traditionally serving a local authority network of schools and education bodies, who provide a subscription-based advice, training and resource service designed to help schools equip and resource their libraries and get the best out of their libraries. These support services may offer additional short-term loans of material to boost curriculum topic study either in the library or in the classroom; loan and purchase services for school libraries to keep informed of interesting and current resources to develop their collections and get best value out of the school library budget; help to coordinate consortium purchasing schemes particularly for expensive online subscriptions; provide experts to come into schools to give advice; and run training sessions for librarians (see for example the London Borough of Tower Hamlets School Library Service website, <http://towerhamlets-sls.org.uk>). However, this use of outside agencies could also mean the school library taking the lead in building collaboration with other libraries, museums and information or cultural centres to help teachers and students have an enriched learning experience.

Questions such as those set in the *Improve Your Library* framework help the librarian to ensure the effectiveness of the library, and support access. Access to the collection is central to any library and must be a priority for any school librarian. As part of ensuring access the librarian must make sure that the collection is of interest to students (through knowledge of their interests, needs and abilities); that the school librarian is creative in the strategies that are used to ensure students enter the library and then have appropriate information-literacy skills to access the collection, training which Keller (2006:3) recommends, should be offered by the library media specialist. The classification system (whether a school version of the Dewey system, a subject index or a colour-coding system used by some primary schools) (Lemaire, 2004:14), is an essential part of enabling students to access the collection with confidence. In the United Kingdom, traditionally schools have been encouraged to use the Dewey classification system which was also historically used in public libraries, and it is helpful to have one system which is consistent for students to recognize whatever school they are in and which is familiar also in their wider use of libraries (Barrett and Douglas, 2004). It is worth noting that Van Riel, who set up a library design and furnishing business *Opening the Book* in the UK in response to what she felt was a clear failure of libraries to appreciate the importance of appealing and easy-to-use spaces, advocates presenting library

collections in simple and attractive arrangement more in line with the user's own perspective, rather than a very librarian-led classification system. As a result, many United Kingdom libraries have begun to blend a less formal interest-themed stock presentation with their traditional classification. She notes that whatever system libraries choose to classify and organize their collection it must be clear and not over-complicated (Van Riel 2012).

Shenton (2006) provides an interesting example of a common practice of using genre categorization of fiction as a creative approach to help students find the book they want in his school library. In response to what was a poorly-accessed collection he piloted an alternative classification system for fiction in which thirteen categories were created to encourage student access. These included:

*Rites of passage novels or other works of fiction focusing on young people dealing with problems associated with, for example, school, love, peer-group pressure; adversity or other challenges resulting from progress towards adulthood; Spy, crime, mystery and detective fiction, featuring espionage, intrigue and Suspense; Historical works; Science fiction, Humorous work and Easy Readers*

(Shenton 2006:129).

Easy access to the collection is fundamental in encouraging students (and staff) who are used to dealing with Google and Facebook to use the resources on offer in the school library, but as Kirkland writes in relation to the online experience for school library users,

*We are very concerned about making our websites usable, and using the latest in interactive web-based technologies to enhance our students' learning experience. Yet the most basic of library online experiences, that of using the online catalogue for accessing our physical collections, seems to be nowhere on the radar when it comes to conversations in the school library world. And it needs to be.*  
(Kirkland 2010:114-115).

These types of approaches that draw students into the collection enabling them to feel both confident in accessing school library resources and feeling that the resources are relevant and up to date in supporting the curriculum, are essential if a school library is to justify its role in the school, its contribution to students' learning and its budget.

According to Mitchell, the teacher-librarian role has an interdisciplinary perspective and because of this they

*are in a unique position to see the big picture of the curriculum, and by making the most of this ‘helicopter view’ can help identify silos and make connections ‘on the ground’. Being well aware of issues related to maintaining currency of resource collections, of emerging sciences and new technologies, and in keeping up with new issues, teacher-librarians can link these back to curriculum in relevant places* (Mitchell 2011:13).

The message is clear, an effective library that has the capacity to support and extend students’ learning is one where the librarian has an understanding and direct link into the school curriculum and knowledge of the students as users.

## **2.9 ICT and the 21<sup>st</sup> century school library**

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has had a major impact on the role of the school librarian in terms of enabling them to carry out their role, manage their resources, support students’ learning of the curriculum and through the school intranet and the internet itself assisting learners to find information and to use it safely. The term ICT covers any piece of equipment (e.g. computer, tablet, mobile phone) that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically in a digital form and includes both internal networks (intranet) and external network systems, and computerized library management systems (Tilke, 2002). The IFLA/UNESCO Internet Manifesto Guidelines (2006) provide a framework for the development and implementation of policy on the creative and safe use of the internet in a range of libraries including schools, paying attention to freedom of expression and freedom of access to information and in the case of children and young people, where libraries have a duty of care, to ensure that,

*There is no unwanted exposure to material that their parents and guardians might consider harmful; consideration should be given to providing special space, training, equipment, and portals for children’s Internet use* (IFLA/UNESCO 2006:5).

In 2010 Joyce Valenza, in her *Manifesto for 21<sup>st</sup> century school librarians*, showed how central the many forms of online involvement and technology have become for student

engagement and benefit from school libraries. She moved the understanding of the school library another step on from learning resource centre to ‘libratory’ (Valenza, 2010) – a place where students and staff exploit technology and online resources and networks to be creative learners.

Because of the range of aspects within this heading, ICT and the school library will be separated into three key categories which will be explored in turn:

### **2.9.1 Technology, the internet and Web 2.0 as part of school library resources**

Digital technologies have had a major impact on the relationship of learning, teaching and library provision, particularly since the late 1990s. The school library literature then considering ICT and the library was largely concerned with making good use of CD-Rom and other audiovisual resources (Burton, 1995; Tilke, 1998a) and with helping students to understand how to navigate and select information appropriately from the internet in conjunction with print resources (Herring, 1999) and in some cases in creating a library intranet where an edited version of the internet could be set up by selecting websites to be made available inside school safety firewalls instead of full internet access.

Now, at the start of the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is still very important to teach students how to be discriminating users of online material but there is a much greater emphasis on the library working in collaboration with school study sites to provide recommended websites in support of curriculum subjects and acting as a linking system to many different Web 2.0 tools, to encourage students to work collaboratively with other students and with staff to build their own resources, to use a much wider range of media via the internet and to be creators of their own material. As Pavey notes (Pavey, 2011), resources such as DVDs may soon become irrelevant as students use video files streamed from the internet, or use podcast and view-later options for broadcast programmes. There is a much wider range of materials to be balanced, bringing together digital media with print resources. The current literature on school libraries and digital collections shows that school librarians are concerned with how to keep track of the variety of free and commercial resources, both as curriculum resources but also especially as the different tools to use to give teachers and students the greatest

choice of engaging with information, culture and reading options (Pavey, 2011). Librarians are providing e-books, subscribing to online reference resources and running library blogs (Bradnock and Dubber, 2007). They are using Web 2.0 tools to exploit QR codes, share videos and presentations and create library presence in social networking such as facebook and twitter (Valenza 2010; Bradnock 2012).

There is a vast amount of online discussion by school librarians and educators on how to find out and get the best out of the digital environment (see for example discussion on School Librarians Network; Dunn, 2011; Resources for School Librarians). Some of this is about finding the best tools and resources, but some of it is also about trying to understand the best educational value of e-resources and use of technology and how to use it to engage students in learning and how to help teachers and students see the benefits and the limitations of digital and more traditional print resources (Asselin and Doiron 2008; Todd 2008; Pavey 2009; Doiron 2011; Webb 2012). A key challenge emerging from the literature is therefore how librarians understand the pedagogy value of digital resource involvement and support their teaching colleagues by identifying and sharing research and professional good practice evidence from the education and the library fields of publishing as well as making good use of the tools themselves.

The librarian also has to be much more aware of the legal issues around copyright and digital rights for different media, and to be able to educate students, teachers and parents about these. There are practical issues for digital collection building which are concerned with negotiating contracts with digital resource suppliers and with choosing the best technology to support students' use of digital media (Doiron 2011; Fieldhouse and Marshall (eds), 2012).

### **2.9.2 School library management systems**

Tilke (2002:224) acknowledges the potential that technology brings to school libraries whilst recognizing common issues such as finance and time needed to develop familiarity and engage in development and maintenance, noting that some school librarians are working with second and third generation library management systems. Currently a range of school library management systems are available to the school librarian. These systems may form part of a whole school integrated system intended to

support the wider management processes involved in school administration (e.g. Atrium), have developed from something more general into packages aimed at school library use (e.g. Softlink and MicroLibrarian) or be designed specifically for school libraries (e.g. Accessit). There are many different systems available, but essentially they offer a combination of database systems to integrate the record and organization of the school library collection holdings, external resource links and user information. Through these, the library manages the processes of acquiring material, adding records to the catalogue, circulating physical resources to users or providing access to electronic resources by users, and managing a variety of communication and monitoring activities. In many cases these systems are web-based, allowing students and staff to use them in school or out of school and enabling the library to build in a variety of electronic resources, social networks, RSS feeds and Web 2.0 tools, and even to share access to other schools' library catalogues. Some of these management systems, such as the various MicroLibrarian packages, are widely used around the world which facilitates collaborative international partnership activity (Micro Librarian Systems - website).

The literature on use of school library management systems emphasizes the importance of the librarian working closely with school management to identify what exactly proposed systems are capable of, how they can deliver the range of functions needed to support student learning and resource benefit and how the school expects students, staff and perhaps wider users to use the system (Adams and Lemaire 2011). Schools need to consider the costs involved, how easy a system is to update and what technical support is offered (UNESCO ICTLIP, 2001). Thus, for example, Softlink Alice Junior and Alice Book Wizard library systems have been used to help children chose books to suit their tastes and reading abilities in Nassington primary school, using a barcode system and fingerprint recognition options to create an integrated library and learning centre for the school and the community and to make everything as user-friendly as possible (Dhanjal 2005). Librarians should look at how the system can be used to enhance curriculum understanding and fit to independent learning:

*A library management package should be not bought solely as an electronic catalogue of all the school's resources or to make admin (sic) easier, its best use is as an information retrieval tool for both teachers and pupils. If appropriate 'keywords' are used which relate directly to curriculum use, then this will be an invaluable tool for the whole school (Hampshire County Council - website).*

Although school library management system providers may sound as if their products are able to provide ‘all the answers’, the message is that librarians should consult with practitioners who are already using different systems, to identify their experience of strengths and weaknesses. A JISC and SCONUL research study, looking at library management systems for higher education contexts, identified that modern systems need to be able to offer the kind of experience that users have learned to expect from retailers like Amazon, rather than a traditional library catalogue interface (Adamson et al., 2008).

### **2.9.3 Internet safety**

Internet safety is one of the most important areas of school Internet use (Herring and Tarter 2007). It is a major concern to schools and is managed in two ways, through:

- the action taken by the school through the use of safety software;
- teaching students and staff about internet safety and how to be safe in an internet environment.

This section looks at the literature relating to these two area and also why internet safety is so important, not only in a school context but in life, and how the librarian can help in this process.

The very nature of the internet, its content and that it is so accessible to children and young people make internet safety an important issue for schools. Streatfield et al. make a very important point in relation to the internet and the school library

*The uncontrolled growth of the Internet and the variable levels of access to e-publications and e-resources are placing greater than ever demands on the information handling capacities of students of all ages, including their ability to read and digest material published in a variety of forms. School libraries have an essential role to play in helping students at every stage in their quest for learning and equipping them to function effectively in an increasingly competitive electronic environment*

(Streatfield et al. 2010:2).

Valcke et al., in discussing UK research by O’Connell et al. (2004:4), cite the important role played by schools, specifically that they were the most commonly reported source of Internet safety advice for children in 2003, adding,

*The results of the study also indicate a high level of unsafe Internet use, such as chatting with unknown persons, sending personal information and photos, and by some children even meeting these persons whom they only know via the Internet. A high percentage of the pupils report being shocked by material found on the Internet. These data suggests that there is definite need of appropriate prevention programs to inform children and teach them concrete Internet skills* (O'Connell *et al* in Valcke *et al.* 2007:11).

This concern over school students' ability to discriminate in use of internet-based information was the focus of the DEMOS report *Truth, lies and the internet*, (Bartlett and Miller 2011). In spite of the significance of the internet to young learners as an essential tool of education, it is also necessary to supervise, guide and direct them to the appropriate and useful websites. Some specialized software companies such as 'Aftab' (1998) suggest that 'safety software' should be used as a measure to protect children from being exposed to material that parents and teachers do not wish them to access enabling teachers to monitor access and sites used.

Internet safety is wider than the responsibility of the school librarian, though they may be the individual to whom staff will go to for advice. Becta (2005:1) write that the head-teacher is ultimately responsible for internet safety in conjunction with the governing body. At a school systems level, Becta (2005:10) advise the use of technological tools that can be used to protect both pupils and the system itself, specifically a firewall and virus protection; monitoring systems - to keep track of who downloaded what, when they downloaded it, and using which computer; and filtering and content control – to minimise access to inappropriate content via the school network.

Valcke *et al.* (2007:11) note that although there is general awareness in school policy and informing pupils about internet safety in the schools within the study, there is no specific guidance in terms of good practice. They draw attention to the way that internet safety is taught, noting that the focus was on rules, regulations and controls rather than actively involving students in understanding and developing skills, through use of role play such as 'Net-Detectives' in which pupils become detectives to investigate the misuse of the school computers. This type of active learning results in improved attitude and behavioural changes, according to Valke.

Becta (2005) has recommended that the school librarian be included as a key member of the school's internet safety team, developing an acceptable use policy for the library, as appropriate to the needs of the school and the library. Becta sees the school librarian as providing specialist input to both the internet safety coordinator and the network manager on filtering issues, with particular reference to the age and research activities of pupils at the school. They note here that filtering tools can create barriers which limit older students engaged in legitimate research and that even when filtering is in place, inappropriate material may still be found accidentally by young students. Becta therefore see the librarian as having a key role in advising on issues relating to information-handling skills (for example, effective search skills) and information literacy as part of pupils' independent learning development, and working with teaching staff to ensure that this is also embedded within the context of the curriculum. Because the issues around internet safety are constantly changing, Becta stresses the importance of the school librarian seeking professional development opportunities for developing and maintaining knowledge on internet safety issues, and have identified an important guidance role for professional associations, such as the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

The central role of school librarians in engaging in and learning from the Internet safely and with confidence is recognized by ALA who conclude,

*School librarians can play a crucial role in “keeping the digital doors open to help young people think about learning beyond the classroom,” according to Danah Boyd, an authority on online social networking sites and a keynote speaker at the 2009 national conference of the American Association of School Librarians. Boyd has unique and often controversial perspectives on how America’s youth are engaging in sites such as MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube... “A lot of social learning . . . goes on in schools that we need to figure out how to support” (ALA 2010:26).*

## **2.10 The school library as a learning space**

This section explores the literature and advice available around the creation of school library spaces that are ‘fit for purpose’ and which support the learning of the student in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The importance of the design of the physical space, resources and computer facilities which enable students to use the library to support their learning and

the contribution of the school librarian will be examined and the case made for why schools need to retain a dedicated library space in their design. Related to any discussion about the library space is a statement about the function of the school library (Tilke, 2002). The library is a dedicated learning space which is often used for a variety of other functions including: a waiting room for visitors, a place to be photographed and to conduct interviews, a place to send classes when teaching personnel cover is not available, a reprographics facilities centre and a place for parent-teacher meetings (Tilke 2002:85-86). Streatfield *et al.* (2010:2) highlight the important role played by the school librarian stating that the character and contribution of the school library is fundamentally established by the school librarian. The way then in which the school library space is used is a reflection of how the school library is seen by the school in terms of its contribution to learning, the degree to which the school librarian has control of the library, and whether the school sees the prime function of the library as an academic one, that of supporting students' learning.

CILIP present a very clear vision in their statement 'School Libraries – A Right' which places the student at the centre of the school library and in so doing, helps define the relationship between the librarian, the physical environment of the library and learning. The physical environment of the library is characterized by safety and democracy and described as

*A safe and secure library environment for learning during and outside school hours, where help, resources and advice are freely available to all* (CILIP 2011:1).

The key to understanding the purpose and role of the school library venue lies in the title of this section, where the school library is thought of and designed as a dedicated 'learning space'. This moves away from the traditional view of a school library as a quiet place to access books, to an environment that actively supports students skills in accessing and understanding information and knowledge, information literacy, individual and cooperative learning and where the resources available are:

*High quality and wide-ranging library and classroom resources to support their curriculum which have been carefully selected to meet the needs of their age, learning style and ability and organized to provide easy access and availability* (CILIP 2011:1).

It models the concept of a ‘hive of learning activity’ supporting the learning of students and staff to access a wide range of topics and resources through a wide range of media. The school library has the potential to support the learner of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, enabling them to access and understand electronic, digital and virtual materials to support their learning both in school and in the future when they are in Further and Higher Education. Key to this is the role of the school librarian. They possess the specialist skills and knowledge to act as a guide to the whole school community to navigate learning environments supporting both the curriculum and learning, a point made clearly by Rankin, drawing together perspectives of authors on library design for young people in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Rankin 2012 in Rankin and Brock (eds) 2012).

In order to attract students to use the school library, it is essential that attention is paid to the physical layout and environment of the school library as well as the nature of the collection. The school library must be seen as a place that physically and emotionally encourages students’ learning, and provides a practical environment which supports teaching, whether it is built into planned lesson activities or in free time to support learning. Where the school library is used as a community resource, access and location are also important features which must be considered. The school library should not only be seen as a unique, colour-coordinated environment, but one that is alive with learning and provides opportunities for answering questions and solving problems. The quality and appropriateness of the collection, whether physical or digital as discussed in section 2.8, is central to this. The school library not only a meeting place for students, but a meeting place that supports individual and cooperative learning, reading, researching and evaluating information, thinking and study skills, personalized and creative learning.

Embedded within this description of a school library learning space is the concept of flexibility where the design of the space can be changed and is responsive to both developing technology and the developing needs of the learning community. This can include providing new technology to support computerized access and return of books and resources; internet stations and access; micro environments that include individual quiet learning spaces; group discussion spaces with Smartboards; work stations located either within the library itself or in other parts of the school that form part of a virtual network across the school and support a virtual learning environment (VLE) such as

Blackboard, Fronter or Moodle. Consultation with school librarians in the initial design of the space, especially in case of new-build schools ensures that flexibility is built-in creating a library space where students are able to engage with one another and with their teachers and that the school library has the potential to evolve with the needs of its community.

An extract from an Ofsted inspector's notebook highlights the key physical characteristics of an effective learning resource centre, describing both its physical appearance and how its resources can support students' learning:

*When you walk into this learning resource centre, what immediately strikes you is the stimulating, well maintained and eye catching environment ...*

*The main learning resource centre has been transformed over time to provide specialist areas for sixth form work, careers work, independent work, and ICT research. Students have access to videos and DVDs, with news and current affairs programmes being shown on television at peak times. A diverse selection of newspapers and magazines is also available, catering for the wide-ranging needs of students, including the large number of students who have English as an additional language* (Ofsted 2006:8).

The school library as a learning environment that is fit for purpose is acknowledged by the ALA (2001:95) who describe the library media centre as a place where 'students belong' rather than a place to visit, a point reinforced by Tilke (2002) who recommends that users be consulted as part of the design process to ensure that the views of students are taken into account. IFLA in their guidance to schools advise that it is important to understand how the school library is seen by the school community since they are the main users, advising

*the design of the school library plays a central role in how the library will serve the school. The aesthetic appearance contributes to the feeling of welcome as well as the desire for the school community to spend time in the library*  
(IFLA/UNESCO 2002 rev 2006).

Over thirty years ago, in 1977, the British Library Association produced guidelines suggesting that space provision should be able to accommodate one-tenth of the pupils of the school, together with guidelines on book stock and other media, furniture, equipment, and administrative accommodation. Ray (1982) stated that, when furnishing the resource centers, provision must be made for the shelving and storage of books,

periodicals and audio-visual materials, as well as readers' advisory work and the issue and discharge of books. Tilke covers the same issues in his handbook. He highlights a range of guidelines available to the school librarian, citing the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) (2001), Charlton (2002), Dewe (1996) and Markuson (1999). These cover a series of aspects ranging from furniture and fittings, lighting and air to health and safety. Tilke recommends that these be used as a checklist, and that

*these guidelines will be a good starting point for any consideration of development of the physical space of a school library* (Tilke, 2002:143).

More recently, advice on school library design and the space needs of children and young people has been provided by Erikson and Markuson (2000), Lushinton (2008) and by CILIP's School Libraries Group (Sheard 2007). Sheard gives specific advice in designing a school library that is 'Designed for Learning':

- *Identify how, when & by whom the library space will be used;*
  - *Consider the size of footprint that will be needed to enable these functions; the break out spaces; the needs of individuals, small & large groups; the needs of disabled users; the need for circulation space and access routes; making use of the perimeter for fixtures, to create a central space that can be reconfigured and how best the space can enable learning;*
  - *Incorporate 2D and 3D exhibition/display space*
  - *Ensure visible sight lines*
  - *Consider the advantages of single/multiple entry/exit points; the needs of students and staff for storage and lockers; how resources will be loaned; self issue stations; a focus for student enquiries; zoning with colour and the need for staff work space*
- (Sheard, 2007:4).

Sheard's advice is comparable to that of Hyams (2001) cited in Tilke (2002) who identifies the following elements as essential for successful library design:

- *Ensure access for all ... without compromising attractive design;*
- *Design a flexible layout to accommodate new services... for the future;*
- *Plan a simple layout with good sightlines and discrete zones;*
- *Maximise space and light and avoid clutter to create a feeling of space and airiness;*
- *Select a colour scheme to give harmony and cohesion throughout the library;*
- *Purchase flexible shelving and furniture to reflect the style of the building and its clients* (Hyams, in Tilke 2002:146).

The issue of the physical school library space is therefore not a recent concern. Size has always been an issue and traditionally secondary school libraries tend to be much larger than those in primary school with Ofsted reporting that

*Some primary school libraries were no more than a collection of books in an entrance hall or the contents of a few book cases in a corridor... and ... In primary schools, there was rarely enough room for pupils to browse and carry out research* (Ofsted 2006:7).

However, even secondary schools have claimed that they rarely have enough space for the numbers of students or the range of demands made on them. CILIP has recommended that libraries should be able to seat 10% of a school's students at any one time; Barrett and Douglas (2004:40) noted that according to inspectors it was rare that a UK school was able to do this. Streatfield et al (2010:5) reported that almost a third of their respondents (502 out of 1,542 schools) thought that their library had insufficient space.

Importantly, Ofsted noted that,

*The very best libraries visited provided excellent accommodation and managed to meet a wide range of demands from teachers and pupils... The best libraries were not simply newer or funded better than others, although this was sometimes the case. More than anything else, these libraries enjoyed a high degree of support from headteachers with a realistic understanding of their needs. Many of the best libraries had been created with care, over time, and through the imaginative use of stock rooms, corridors and redundant classrooms* (Ofsted 2006:7).

Attention is drawn to the role of architects in the design of school libraries, a point of particular relevance at the moment in the UK with new-build schools such as academies. Sheard, in addition to providing guidance ranging from furniture, shelving, acoustics, the physical layout of the library and consulting with librarians, students and the wider community, makes an important point:

*Recognize that libraries are not statutory; this can be the time for a school to develop a library space that will make a real difference* (Sheard 2007:2).

Barrett and Douglas take the idea of the library beyond the aesthetics to the function of the library and how it is able to support the needs of the school community, stating

*the library is a learning space, and the planning and design on this as its principal purpose. As it must support the whole school community, flexibility needs to be built into stimulate multiple intelligences and accommodate arrangement of learning styles* (Barrett and Douglas 2004:24).

This is an important aspect that Tilke also addresses when he states

*Without learning, the school library would be nothing, as the need to learn is often the driving force that brings students to use the library. By using the library well students are learning. The product of schools is learning* (Tilke 2002:37).

Clark's survey of school libraries and literacy reinforces this in her findings, reporting that most children in her survey used the library because they had easy access to books, it was a 'friendly space' and because they believed that the school library would help their reading and ultimately do better at school (Clark 2010:4).

The key points made here are that for a school library to work, it must be a space that has its own identity, is attractive and functions for the purpose for which it was intended, which is to support learning. The school library extends beyond the physical space, to values and vision embedded within the library and its potential to transform students through enabling them to read. Provision for school libraries has developed beyond the idea of a book store with tables and shelves in a small room. School library users must perceive the library as a space where they feel they have ownership and which they feel is accessible, somewhere that allows them to work together and to share their reading experiences, a space that meets their needs enabling them to acquire the information and skills that support their learning.

The question that then needs to be addressed is how does the librarian achieve this library that is both attractive and functional? The Working Group on Youth Committee of Library Association: Children and Young People (Blanshard 1997) recommend that a range of factors should be taken into consideration when it comes to the design and layout planning of libraries. The Working Party suggested a ground floor location giving easy access to the collection and adequate supervision in terms of both safety and security. The Working Party also considered the best way to cater for young people with options including a separate room or distinctly separated sections of stock, a clearly defined area for children and a designated space for activities. IFLA (1973), in the

Standards for Public Libraries, recommended allocation of an area that corresponded to the proportion of children in the local population (usually 20% of the space), computer hardware; provision of homework/study facilities (possibly a home centre) and additionally stipulated 16 square metres for every 1000 volumes on the open shelves. While these examples from the literature refer to public library space for children and young people, the general points here on need to accommodate a variety of activities and sufficient space to make effective use of the resources are helpful considerations. Arguably the issue of relative population representation is not a concern for school libraries who already serve a defined age group. However, the basic consideration of proportionate space is relevant in establishing an appropriate allocation for the library within the school space overall and for accommodating the needs of different age groups across the school population within the library space.

Question 4c in the *Improve Your Library* self-evaluation guidance for secondary school libraries and learning resource centers, asks school libraries to consider the following:

- i. *Is the accommodation large enough in relation to population of the school?*
- ii. *Is the LRC accessible to all pupils?*
- iii. *Is the space well organized to meet the needs of pupils and staff (e.g. spaces for different types of use)?*
- iv. *Are the furnishing and décor suitable?*
- v. *What steps are taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety in the LRC?*
- vi. *Is the LRC open at convenient times for pupils and staff?*

(DfES 2004a:23).

The question of accommodation is important since it will affect how the library or learning resource centre is used and whether in turn, it is able to support students' learning. The literature suggests that although there is plenty of advice about what constitutes good practice, and guidelines for school librarians to follow, the reality of what actually exists in schools as Ofsted (2006) has shown, varies. What is key however is that students perceive the school library (whatever its size, location and collection) as a place that they use frequently, and one that they understand as supporting their reading, thinking and learning.

## **2.11 Students' use of the School Library**

School libraries or media centres are of no use if they are not used by the students and school community. Their purpose is to support learning and the curriculum, not to lie empty. HMI report that

*In many schools, pupils use of the library is limited by its inaccessible location for pupils and students, their lack of independent access, the use made of the library for other purposes, and the library's limited opening hours (HMI 2002:2).*

It is important therefore to consider how users can be drawn into the library so that they can use it as a real learning space, and not to share the experience described by Shenton in relation to his survey of a school's new library internet aimed at promoting the school's library, that

*some 87% of the respondents used the library either 'never' or 'only occasionally' and as many as seven in ten of the participating Year Ten girls described their use of the school library in these terms. Thus female members of this cohort could hardly be considered 'library enthusiasts'*  
(Shenton 2007:525).

Shenton in his case study found that student use of the library was very limited and that although many pupils felt that the purpose of the library was to support their study, there was a need for greater comfort and a more informal atmosphere within the library. In contrast, Clark's study exploring students' views of school libraries found that 68.7% used the school library; 28.1% did not use the school library and interestingly, that 3.2% claimed that they did not have one. The majority of students who did use the school library reported that the books were of interest to them; that it was a friendly space and that they thought that its use would help them do better at school. In contrast the students who did not use the library claimed that there were no books of interest to them; their friends did not use it and they did not think that it would make them better at school. One statistically significant gender result was that more girls were unlikely to use the library if their friends did not use it, indicating the strength of peer pressure and the importance of social engagement

Importantly Clark claimed

*a very strong relationship between reading attainment and school library use, with young people who read below the expected level for their age being almost twice more likely to say that they are not a school library user. Conversely, those who read at or above the expected level were nearly three times more likely to say that they are school library users* (Clark 2010:4).

It is not possible to argue from this that there is a direct causal link between using the school library and becoming a better reader; in fact it may be more the reverse - that those students who are already enjoying reading and are good at it are more likely to see the library as a source of further reading pleasure and therefore are less threatened by it and see it as more relevant to their needs. However, there is clearly a correlation, so it makes sense to foster the feeling of the library as a good place to be so that this may also encourage the perception that reading and learning can be enjoyable.

Strucker (2005) reflects on the question posed by one of the trainers at the School Library Journal Leadership summit: How can librarians and teachers create classrooms and school libraries that children will truly want to visit and use? The differences between the educational landscape of the mid 1990s compared with 2005 were discussed, with technology-savvy students referred to as "natives" in the digital world and teachers as "immigrants". He cited Joyce Valenza, a media specialist from a Pennsylvania High School, who reported that internet proficiency often gave students a deceptive sense of self-sufficiency, and the challenge for educators was to figure out how to respect that self-sufficiency yet "intrude in a graceful way" (Strucker 2005:9). He reported that for Valenza, the answer lies in viewing the library as a 24/7 operation in order to reach 'wired students', allowing them library access day or night. It means "translating" the kinds of things librarians have always done, to the online world. In this sense, the library space has become a 'library without walls' – a virtual as well as physical space.

Students that took part in the survey carried out by Bates (2000) identified a number of ways in which libraries could encourage use by students. These included author visits, librarians actively promoting books; providing recently published books, providing multiple copies of well known books, pupil involvement in stock selection, book reviews by pupils, advertising the school library, improving access by keeping libraries

open longer and improving cataloging, and making library surroundings '*brighter and more colourful*'. In contrast negative comments included:

*out-of-date stock; limited range of books; noise levels of either 'silence' or other students being noisy; strict library rules and poor access because of restricted opening times* (Bates, 2000:169).

The advice given by Snowball (2008:29-30) in 'enticing teenagers into the public library' supports the views of the students in Bates' survey and should be taken seriously by school librarians and head teachers, specifically: encourage them to use the library at an early age, make the library bright and inviting with an interesting collection and a good atmosphere, involve young people in planning and ask their views, organize interesting events and programmes that are attractive to young people and keep up with the times in terms of technology using SMS, blogs, wikis, podcasts and dedicated social networking sites. Bates adds an additional point, that of distinguishing between the preferences and interests of boys and girls and using these as constructive ways of promoting reading (Bates, 2000:174). This range of activities and the need to be able to respond to different gender preferences reinforces the issues which emerged from the literature in considering design of the library as virtual and physical place and space (q.v. section 2.10 above).

## **2.12 Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are key aspects of maintaining quality in school libraries. Monitoring is an on-going activity that involves the process of "checking what is happening and the extent to which things have gone according to plan" Best, 1981 in Tilke, 2002:201), whereas evaluation "involves the collection, analysis, discussion and reporting of evidence" (Jenkins et al., 2000 in Tilke 2002:201). This allows judgments to be made about success and to plan for future developments, and is seen as an important part of any manager's role including that of the school librarian with responsibility for the library.

According to CILIP, evaluating the library

*requires progress to be measured and evaluated against agreed priorities and objectives using a variety of techniques. These involve monitoring, collecting data to measure performance, evaluating performance through performance indicators, reporting on progress and reviewing targets and objectives* (Barratt and Douglas 2004:68).

The extent to which staff feel ownership of the evaluation process varies and there is resistance where it is not an integral part of their work practice. The benefits to a school library team working on self-evaluation include improving work practices; planning library development; bidding for additional funding and preparing for inspection (McNicol 2004:294).

School library evaluation has two key aspects that need to be considered simultaneously:

- i. The contribution of the library within the context of the school
- ii. The quality of management and provision within the library itself

In terms of the school library in context, McNicol (2004:289) noted that traditionally school libraries engaged in evaluation in terms of library management internally, but they were rarely required to contribute to whole school self-evaluation to provide evidence of the school library's impact on learning and teaching and whole school aspects such as literacy, using the findings to inform future planning. She flagged this as an area that needs to be developed so that the school library is seen as any other department within a school. Ofsted affirmed this view, commenting

*Even in the best schools, it was unusual to find that librarians were expected to report formally on the work and impact of the library. Annual reports to the governing body were the exception and, where they were written, tended to focus on resources and accommodation. Departments generally report each year on the standard and quality of their work. There is no reason why librarians in secondary schools should not do this; many would wish to do so* (Ofsted, 2006:13).

McNicol (2004:295) makes the important point that self-evaluation is not only the responsibility of library staff: rather it should be part of seeing the school library in a wider school context, and it is important that senior management, the literacy

coordinator and special needs coordinator (SENCO) play an active part in reviewing the impact of the school library on student learning.

The DfES created self-evaluation frameworks for both primary and secondary school libraries and learning resource centres in order to help librarians and school management address both aspects of evaluation – the internal library processes and services and the wider contribution to school self-evaluation. The toolkits pose a series of questions to school librarians allowing them to evaluate the quality of their library and their contribution to students' learning, and staffing. Charles Clark, the Minister for Education at the time, in introducing the secondary school library evaluation handbook wrote

*Excellence is based on continually reviewing and improving performance and I am delighted to be able to introduce this self-evaluation framework. It provides school librarians with a clear way of assessing the quality of what they provide and measuring outcomes, providing evidence of achievement and identifying areas that could be improved. It also provides practical advice and suggestions for improving the way that the library supports pupil learning.*

(DfES 2004a:3).

Clark's observations are important because the evidence from the schools visited by Ofsted suggested that "few [staff] are confident about self-evaluation" ... "or conduct any systematic review of the library or its impact" (Ofsted 2006:12). The overall picture identified was of very limited use of data, even when easily retrievable from library management systems, and with minimal systematic analysis and even less exploiting of the findings in any formal reporting system back to school management.

Of concern was the final point that "too few headteachers were aware of the data held or used it to ask questions about the library's effectiveness and its use by subjects" (Ofsted 2006:13) suggesting that school libraries were so low down on headteachers' priorities that they did not engage in an educational discussion with librarians on the contribution of school library to learning and teaching, even though the library was part of the school's resources. Gildersleeves notes that if headteachers and school management are to be interested in library evaluation, it is important to understand

*the culture of evaluation within the parent and partner organizations to discover what is valued as evidence and why. This can help to identify whom to target with information, which types of approach and examples are politically*

*attractive, or what will be particularly useful in collaboration or shared evaluation*

(Gildersleaves 2012b:211).

She further argues (2012) that successful evaluation needs to fit into a timeline as part of a continuous review process; have clarity about the audience of the evaluation, be clear about the questions to be asked and the type of data to be gathered to include both quantitative and qualitative data, the purpose of the evaluation and how the evaluation findings will be used so that they can contribute to change, development and improvement of the service.

An improvement framework, *Inspiring learning for all*, aimed at encouraging libraries to assess their strengths and plan improvements, provide evidence of the impact of their activities through the generic learning and generic social outcomes, and improve their strategic and operational performance was developed by The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) (2008). This framework, although designed as applicable to a range of library contexts, demonstrates the importance of connecting the school library's role and services clearly into the wider school's goals for teaching, learning and student development. Additionally, it shows the importance of seeing this local level of school library evaluation as part of the bigger picture of national educational and social priorities. MLA recommend that for inexperienced evaluators it is useful to use inputs/outputs in the form of quantitative data that is easy to count and communicate, however for real value, quantitative data needs to be combined with qualitative data such as students' views about the collection or why they chose to use or not use the school library. The combination of both quantitative and qualitative data enables the librarian to examine the impact of their provision on the user, for example teachers' use of library resources to improve their teaching; improving students' literacy through their increased use of the library or involvement in literacy related activities. In this way the librarian is able to evaluate the quality of their library provision, changes or patterns in use to identify strengths or areas requiring improvement, in addition to identifying budget needs or training implications.

Ofsted (2006:13) offered examples of good practice in areas for monitoring and evaluation as a starting point, including

- monitoring of use by pupils before and after school and at lunchtime;
- analysis of use by classes and individual pupils during lessons;
- collection of the outcomes of research and examples of good work;
- questionnaires for pupils (and staff);
- a collection of ‘golden moments’, such as a letter from the head of the art department, thanking the librarian for work done to promote learning in the subject;
- evaluation of the impact of one-off events, such as National Poetry Day.

This advice is reinforced by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) who pose the key question:

*What evidence is there that the self-evaluation resulted in measurable and observable improvements in the quality of the service, and has made a positive impact on the achievements and experiences of children and young people?*  
 (SLIC 2009:11)

They advise that the signposts to success are that students “enjoy using the library and use library resources with confidence, progressing as responsible and independent learners”. In order to test the question above on constructive use of evaluation, SLIC offer a selection of evidence resources, including

- *Self-evaluation documents relating to the impact of service delivery*
  - *School library resource centre improvement plan(s) and progress reports*
  - *School improvement plan*
  - *Consultation documents*
  - *Questionnaires*
  - *Peer evaluations (school colleagues/critical friends; external colleagues)*
  - *Children’s and young people’s feedback*
  - *Feedback from other stakeholders*
  - *Photographic/video/blog evidence of improved experiences*
- (SLIC 2009:11).

This is evident also from the range of sources in the very detailed support notes to the 2004 *Improve Your Library* toolkits. However, Gildersleeves, in her ongoing research into school library impact, found that school management teams were often not aware of the library self-evaluation tools. She found that some school librarians lacked confidence in how to embark on testing for and demonstrating the value of the library to

school and pupil need or how to use available frameworks to their advantage. She also found that library staff were often unsure of how to communicate impact to their school management, missing out on key library advocacy opportunities (Gildersleeves 2006; 2012b).

## 2.13 Library staffing

This section aims to examine the role and responsibility of the school librarian, looking at both ‘technical’ librarian specific areas and their wider school contribution to supporting learner development within the school. The terms ‘librarian’ and even ‘learning resource centre manager’ are used in different contexts, encompassing

- A chartered or qualified librarian (holding a professional qualification in library and information studies)
- a teacher-librarian (usually someone holding dual librarianship and teaching qualifications)
- Somebody who has skills and possibly a qualification to run and manage the school library, (perhaps gained through extended experience and vocational development courses)
- a teacher with some responsibility for the library (but not usually any specific library training)
- administrative staff appointed to a library role
- volunteers, retired staff and other non-trained enthusiasts

(Tilke, 2002; Barrett and Douglas, 2004; Ofsted, 2006; Streatfield *et al.* 2010).

The points discussed earlier within this chapter give an indication of the range of responsibilities expected of effective school librarians and the demands upon their educational, management and advocacy skills. This vision of library use sees the school librarian as a mentor who needs to have the professional expertise to guide students through a complex range of activities and resources, support staff in their teaching and whose aim is to develop skills and learning:

*A skilled library practitioner with responsibility and time to help children and young people develop the skills needed to manage today’s information overload,*

*to become lifelong learners and to meet the future job market's need for problem solvers and independent thinkers (CILIP 2011:1).*

This relationship between the school librarian and the learner, where the school librarian directly supports learner development is clearly set out in the core entitlement statement CILIP which states that every child, school's teaching team and wider school community should expect the support of a professionally staffed school library. The emphasis here is on 'professionally staffed'. CILIP define these professional qualities in statements such as:

- *Support from designated library staff with extensive knowledge, enthusiasm and experience to advise, encourage and inspire wider reading and reading for pleasure to ensure fair provision for all;*
- *A skilled library practitioner with responsibility and time to help children and young people develop the skills needed to manage today's information overload, to become lifelong learners and to meet the future job market's need for problem solvers and independent thinkers;*
- *understands the curriculum and pastoral needs of teaching staff and who will support these with managed resources;*
- *will collaborate with staff on curriculum planning and development and be involved in teaching;*
- *will develop partnership working with other key organizations within and beyond the school;*
- *A designated library professional who can play a key role in developing the school as a hub of the community (CILIP 2011:1).*

The role of librarians has evolved: they are not simply employed to collect and look after books; their role is to place the library at the heart of the school, and the skills and training of staff need to reflect this. The school librarian's role has developed beyond management responsibilities of the library itself to the library's strategic contribution to the school itself in terms of developing student literacy and supporting the school curriculum. Their responsibilities have been shown in the literature reviewed to range from managing the library budget, ensuring an up to date and appropriate collection that meets student and staff needs, and ensuring internet safety, through to collaborating with school management in developing policy and delivering teaching, and to creating a welcoming and learning environment that is attractive to students and staff and is used by them to support all aspects of learning.

CILIP (2002) in presenting guidelines to staff of primary school libraries, reflected the range of options that were likely to exist in schools and offered the following staffing options: the appointment of a full time professional librarian; an option of a professional librarian shared by a group of school and the identification of a teacher as a library coordinator, line managed by the head teacher (CILIP 2002:5). In the case of the UK, even 30 years ago, a survey of secondary school libraries in six local educational authorities confirmed that in the vast majority of these schools

*the professional librarian was a considerable asset whose expertise and influence showed itself in greater accessibility, better stock, more effective organization and, rather less frequently, in greater use by individuals and department*

(Pain 1987:29-30).

The Ofsted report *Good School Libraries* noted that in the most effective primary and secondary schools visited, well trained specialist librarians had a positive impact on teaching and learning. They flagged up the range of competencies needed by school librarians:

- *financial and management skills*
- *good knowledge of children's literature and resources*
- *a passion for reading*
- *an understanding of the research process*
- *knowledge of the curriculum in schools*
- *teaching skills*
- *an ability to work with all the pupils and teachers in the school*

(Ofsted 2006:10).

Kaplan (2007:301) reinforces the expertise of the school library media specialist as an information specialist vital to developing the skills needed by students to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup>. century. The USA SKILLs Act requires all schools to have a highly qualified school library media specialist, along with the resources to provide the necessary materials to support the school curriculum and to meet the reading needs of the students. This legislation acknowledges, at the national level, the instructional role played by the school librarian and by the library media program. The very existence of this legislation offers support for the administrator who needs help in arguing for a fulltime certified school library media specialist in his or her school (Kaplan 2007: 303). Streatfield et al. raise concerns about the relationship between unqualified school librarians and their

ability to make an impact on teaching and learning in their schools, and make the following important observation

*The character and contribution of the school library is fundamentally established by the school librarian, working in the context set by the Senior Leadership Team and hopefully mirroring the ethos and best practices of the school (Streatfield et al. 2010:2).*

Kaplan argues the importance of a school library media specialist with the expertise to understand the fundamentals of librarianship specifically, literacy, collection development, organization, management and educational technology. As a key educator, the school librarian knows how to teach the information and technology skills our students need to be successful in today's information economy, knows how to teach students with diverse learning abilities and with diverse cultural backgrounds, and knows how to work with the other school faculty members to help meet the state and school curricular standards. Additionally, the librarians writing in Markless *et al* (2009) emphasize how important it is for the librarian to be in a position to build strong relationships with school management and teaching colleagues in order to maximize the benefit of the library for student learning. In order for this to happen it is therefore important for the librarian to be seen as a colleague and not simply as support staff.

Qualified school librarians are crucial to a successful school library and to ensure full exploitation of its resources. However, in many parts of the world, schools have been deprived of having a full-time qualified school librarian for a range of reasons. In some countries this problem was sometimes addressed by employing a part-time chartered school librarian but in most cases the job was handled by what was called a 'teacher-librarian' – in this case a teacher who assumes responsibility for the library. The growing development of the school library together with the widespread increase of 'resource centers', has accelerated and has shown the need rather for a qualified school librarian who is, ideally, also qualified as a teacher.

*In the UK, a charted librarian is a professional librarian, who through experience and qualification in library and information study has become a registered as a chartered member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (Tilke, 2002:20).*

It is interesting to note however, that according to the Booktrust survey carried out by Creaser and Travis (2008:19) none of the 231 primary schools in their survey were run by full-time Chartered librarians, although a few did have either teacher/librarians or part-time Chartered librarians in charge. In contrast 48% of the secondary school sample was run by a full-time Chartered librarian, with a further 11% having a part-time Chartered librarian. The National Centre for Education Statistics report issued in June 2009 (quoted in The State of America's Libraries, ALA 2010:18) reported that in traditional public schools in terms of higher level qualifications, 57% of paid professional library centre staff had a Master's degree in a library-related major, a higher proportion than in public charter schools (29%).

According to Loertscher (1999:9) qualifications and experience for those who may work as school librarian include: knowledge of the curriculum, education (in the case of the USA, librarians also hold teaching qualifications), experience, tools and materials expertise, knowledge of technology to enhance learning, a background of successful practice with a wide variety of teachers, students and technologies, knowledge of student achievement over time. This is important for the idea of the extended role of the school librarian, who has to combine teaching and information specialist skills with a range of management and administration competencies.

The continued professional development of library staff has been identified by Loertscher as essential in developing their skills in the relevant field of their specialization. He notes,

*All staff irrespective of seniority or special background will benefit from having access to adequate and relevant training opportunities which will broaden their professional development. The training programme should ensure that the knowledge, skills and expertise (including IT skills) required to deliver high quality library service to children, are possessed in all staff to an appropriate degree). Advantage should also be taken of other partnerships. For example, homework clubs might involve librarians, teachers, youth workers and parents*  
(Loertscher 1999:43-44).

The Ofsted report identified (2006:11) that schools with the most effective libraries accorded their librarians a status at least of middle management, enabling the librarian to be part of teaching and learning working parties and to be seen as equivalent to

teachers in participating in staff training and as part of the curriculum line management. The best schools took this a step further, recognizing the librarian at the level of head of subject department. This section has shown the range of responsibility carried by professional librarians in delivering the significant management, resource development and educational roles that the best schools recognize as crucial in achieving the best value from their libraries towards student learning and teaching staff support.

## **2.14 Conclusions from the Literature Review**

It can be seen from the extensive literature about school libraries that the role and purpose of school libraries has come a long way from the original concept of a collection of (largely print) curriculum support resources where the librarian's task was to organize these and make them accessible to students and teaching staff. Today the school library is a key resource for fostering literacy, motivating active readers and developing independent learners. The librarian brings together print materials with a variety of digital resources and careful selection and linking of internet-based information, and is a key teacher of research skills and safe and effective internet use. The most effective libraries are closely grounded in their school's educational mission and policies, and the librarian works alongside teaching colleagues in curriculum development planning and in evaluation of library activity towards achievement of the wider school goals. The librarian may also be involved in working with other agencies and with communities beyond the immediate school focus, and will be actively part of professional networks.

However it can also be seen from the literature that the staffing and effective use of libraries is very variable and largely subject to how clearly school principals and policy makers understand the contribution libraries and librarians can contribute to learning and to the achievement of school goals. There is no consistent legal position for the provision of school libraries or librarians, and the latter may be fully qualified in librarianship and in teaching, or indeed may be only volunteer assistants.

In particular a number of issues emerged from the Literature Review which are relevant to the research questions underpinning this thesis.

- There are clear internationally defined expressions of the purpose of school libraries and guidelines which should be at the root of national policy for school libraries;
- Libraries need to formulate clear policies which are rooted in the wider strategy of their school goals;
- Libraries have key contributions to offer in developing the love of reading as well as practical literacies;
- Librarians have a significant role to play in developing students as effective independent learners, particularly in the rapidly changing digital environment where students need to be able to use the internet and other resources safely both at school and in their life beyond school. As such, they need to be recognized by school principals and teachers as educator colleagues.
- School libraries are no longer ‘curriculum support collections’ but are ‘libratories’ (Valenza 2010) making creative use of digital technologies and librarians need to be active exploiters of digital media.
- Librarians need to learn and use the skills of service evaluation and communication of value, to demonstrate how they and libraries are delivering school goals and benefitting students and teaching colleagues;
- Librarians are managers of a complex service, demanding a complex skills set as strategic managers, as literacies leaders, as teachers and enablers and as promoters and advocates.

Some further issues were identified, concerning the literature on school libraries.

- There was relatively little published material identified - as handbooks, academic articles or as practitioner guidelines - on school libraries from the perspective of Middle East countries;
- Much of the most useful literature identified on purpose, policy and practice has been published through the various professional associations, whether internationally by IFLA or UNESCO or nationally by bodies such as CILIP, the School Library Association or the American Library Association;

- There was no single, obvious place to turn to, whether nationally within Qatar or the UK or more widely, to identify critical research or practical guidelines for school libraries. School librarians wishing to inform themselves of current developments or of questions of good practice therefore need to scan a range of journal and research databases, or subscribe to several professional bodies for their journals, publications and advice resources;
- The literature on school libraries seems mainly to be written for librarians, rather than aimed at school principals or educators. There were exceptions, such as the report by Ofsted or information more generally on pedagogic theory, and in the case of academic journal articles key words relating to education terms such as K-12, school phase or literacies could be found by teachers researching in these areas. However, most of the material was found through library and information science databases or professional publication listings.

## **Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The research is presented as a case study of the Qatari context encompassing both quantitative and qualitative data. The case study employs a range of data collection methods including both primary (empirical data) and secondary sources.

A case study is defined as the study of an instance in action (Creswell, 2007) enabling a specific community to be examined. Case studies, according to Cohen *et al.* 'can penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis' (2005:181). A further strength is that 'they observe effects in real contexts, recognizing that context is a powerful determinant of both causes and effects' (2005:181). Case studies, according to Hitchcock and Hughes (1999) cited in Cohen et al. (2005:182), are set in a time period, a geographical location, organization, institutional and 'other contexts which enable boundaries to be drawn around the case' and which help to define it. In this situation, the case study is of school library provision in Qatar, during the time period of 2002-2012, with data collected from a range of stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, the Supreme Council of Education, the Qatar Foundation, key government policy makers, the University of Qatar, school principals, librarians, students and parents. The research bridges the transition from the Ministry of Education with its centralized public schools to the current system of the Supreme Council of Education with independent schools and a changed curriculum, using evidence from both systems and drawing on case examples from United Kingdom schools for comparison.

In approaching this research, it was clear that a number of factors must influence the structure of investigation. The key research foci of this study have been identified as

**Question 1. What evidence exists of the critical evaluation of the role and effect of school libraries in Qatar, which might be used by policy makers to inform school library development in the 21<sup>st</sup>. century?**

**Question 2. How has the development of educational policy within Qatar influenced the role and activity of school libraries within the last 30 years?**

**Question 3.What are the critical factors contributing to successful school libraries which may be identified from the experience of other countries, and how do the experiences of Qatari public school libraries compare with these?**

The first and second questions both concern identification of documentary evidence: of evaluative studies, of the historical parallels in development of education policy and school libraries and of the strategic priorities of the Supreme Education Council. The third question demands the drawing-together of a profile of what makes 21<sup>st</sup> century school libraries effective, which can then be used as a basis for comparison of Qatari school libraries and inform possible recommendations for development. Whilst the building of this profile needs to include direct observation of example libraries and comment from librarians, a substantial amount of ‘best practice’ picture can be built up from published guidelines, case studies and critical works. A key element within the methodology is therefore the Literature Review, which has helped to shape the path of this research and encompasses the identification and consideration of primary and secondary material for all three research questions.

First-hand perspectives are also deemed important to the understanding of the goals and impact of educational policy and of the ‘state of the nation’ picture of school libraries now in Qatar. A unique aspiration of this research has been to draw together a wide range of perspectives on the role and contribution of school libraries, going beyond the purely librarian-focused investigation of earlier student studies. The methodology for this research therefore includes a range of semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires with policy-makers, budget holders, school library practitioners and teachers, higher education librarians and academics, university and school students and with parents.

In addressing the third research question, it was felt that insights into the challenges and opportunities experienced by school libraries and librarians outside of Qatar would be important in complementing information gained through the literature review. The methodology therefore incorporates an element of observational visits to school libraries and supporting services in the United Kingdom, and semi-structured interviews with practitioners.

### **3.2 Literature Review**

Both Arabic and international literature in English was examined. The aim of the literature review has been to establish the nature of information already available on school libraries in Qatar and to examine the understanding of school library purpose, role and value more widely. Arabic literature on the position of Qatar was very limited, mainly in the form of legislation and internal government reports, plans and regulations relating to education generally and with limited reference to school libraries specifically. For the wider picture across different international contexts of the function of school libraries, the services they offer, models of good practice and contribution to the teaching and learning environment, a variety of sources has been used. These include academic journals, professional literature, conference papers, books and online resources.

Because of the diverse terminology surrounding school libraries it was necessary to begin by examining the range of words and phrases commonly used in Qatar, internationally and in the United Kingdom, both in Arabic and English. Thus for example in the United Kingdom, *school library*, *school library resource centre* and *learning resource centre* are all common, while in America the term *school library media specialist* is used alongside *school librarian*. By contrast in the United Kingdom, *school library service* tends to mean a locally-run business, normally linked to a local education authority, which provides a subscription-based resource and advice service to schools in support of the school's own library service. Preferred terms also change over time and are complicated by differences in English and American English spellings, such as *centre* and *center* or *programme* and *program*.

There could also be confusion over how apparently similar phrases are differently applied. Thus in Qatar *public school* refers to a school run by the Ministry of Education whereas in English the same term applies to a very select number of independent schools. Additionally, in the United Kingdom, the education system now has a wide range of school types, some of which do not even use the term *school* – such as *academies* and *colleges*. This diversity of terminology further exists when considering specific aspects of library activity, such as supporting student reading and information skills. In these cases it was necessary to consider also terms such as *literacy*, *reader*

*development, information literacy, study skills, media programmes.* As a result, when carrying out literature searches, it was necessary to use a wide range of key terms and to take account of recognized subject headings and regularly used keywords.

### **3.3 Interviews**

There are a number of types of interviews described in the literature. Some examples mentioned by Cohen et al. (2005) include: standardized interviews, in-depth interviews, ethnographic interviews, elite interviews, life history interviews and focus interviews. They also refer to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), adding to this list semi structured interviews and group interviews. Lincoln and Guba (1989) in Cohen et al (2005:270) include structured interviews while Oppenheim (1992) has outlined a further four types: informal conversational interviews, interview guide approaches, standardized open-ended interviews and closed quantitative interviews.

For the purposes of this research, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. The questions asked arose both from an examination of the review of literature, specifically in relation to standards and examples of good practice, and through the author's own in-depth knowledge and experience as the former Head of Department of School Libraries in Qatar for two years and as school libraries inspector for three years. Open ended questions were used to ensure the greatest flexibility, allowing the interviewer,

*to probe so that (she) may go into more depth if (she) chooses, or to clear up any misunderstandings; they enable the interviewer to test the limits of the respondent's knowledge; they encourage co-operation and establish rapport* (Cohen et al. 2005:275).

This semi-structured approach was felt to be more sensitive to the courtesy granted by respondents in making themselves available for interview and the questions were designed to take into account the various responsibilities of all the respondents involved at the policy and decision-making level and as such could be described as 'purposive'. Unique access to these high level decision-makers supports the original contribution of this research. The group included representatives of the higher managerial levels within both the Ministry of Education and the new educational structure which came into force in 2003.

All interviews took place at the Ministry of Education in Doha during 2005 and at Institute of Education schools during 2007, and each lasted for approximately one hour in length. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews (as interviewees did not consent to be taped using a digital recorder) and key points reported back to the interviewees throughout the interview to check for accuracy. Interviewees comprised:

- The Minister of Education.
- The Under-Secretary
- The Assistant Under-Secretary for Cultural Affairs
- The Head of Department for the National Curriculum
- The Director of Department of School Libraries at the Ministry of Education
- Director of School Libraries at the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (this includes a school set up to provide progressive education)
- The Director of the Institute of Education in the Supreme Council of Education

Additionally, semi-structured interviews were used to obtain the perspectives of those actively engaged in delivering the new educational model and how school libraries fit into this. Accordingly fourteen interviews were conducted in 2007 with each of:

- Principals of 7 independent schools representing different phases (elementary, middle and secondary), boys' and girls' schools.
- Librarians of 7 independent schools representing different phases (elementary, middle and secondary), boys' and girls' schools.

The choice of schools was determined by the author by requesting the Institute of Education to provide a selection of the new independent schools, to represent each gender, education phases and a variety of locations. Two further interviews with the Principal and Librarian of Ali Bin Talib Independent School were made in 2009.

The aim of interviewing key personnel involved in the decision-making, legislative and reform process was to provide the study with more investigative depth with regards to policy underpinning the role of school libraries in Qatar and critically to explore the

opinions of this key group within the Ministry of Education and its successor, the Supreme Education Council. The views and philosophy of the latter were compared with the traditional respondents identified earlier, enabling the research to chart the evolution and development of the library system during this process of transition. The recent educational reform in Qatar has brought about a range of changes to schools, the curriculum, and the school libraries' structure and management through moving away from a centralized system to one of independence in all aspects of decision making including the budget, staffing and strategic direction.

### **3.4 Questionnaires**

The questionnaire survey instruments were piloted to test both the questions themselves and the approach, and a range of question types were used in the questionnaire as advised by Denzin and Lincoln (2000). These included: closed questions which restricted the respondents' choices but were easy to analyse, and open questions which, as noted by Cohen et al. allowed the respondents to

*write a free response in their own terms in their own terms, to explain and qualify their responses and avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of response. On the other hand the responses are difficult to code and classify*

(Cohen et al. 2005:248).

Questionnaires were administered to five groups of respondents:

**3.4.1. Public school librarians' pilot:** Geographically, the pilot questionnaire to public school librarians was designed to survey more than 40 schools in different regions of Qatar. Doha, the capital city, was allocated 30% of the total number of the questionnaire samples. This was on the basis of the high concentration of schools in Doha compared to other parts of Qatar. The pilot was used to test questions, prior to the development of the National Survey questionnaire to public school librarians.

**3.4.2. Public school librarians' National Survey:** The National Survey questionnaire to public school librarians was designed to cover 200 school libraries (the majority of all Qatari schools) in all the different regions of the country. School librarians were chosen as the target of this survey, rather than for example school management, for their

central role in creating a library culture, making school libraries more effective and supporting their integration into the educational process. Of the 200 distributed in 2004, 150 questionnaires (75%) were returned, analysed and incorporated into this research.

In both cases, the school librarians responding provide a representative sample of the population. This is considered by Cohen et al. as appropriate for a national survey research

*Causal comparative and experimental methodologies require a sample size of no fewer than 15 cases, and that survey research should have no fewer than 100 cases in each major subgroup and twenty and fifty in each minor subgroup*  
(Cohen et al. 2005:93).

In this case, with the focus on school library practitioners, it was not appropriate to break down the target into different case types with questions specifically designed for the various types of school. However, the questionnaire was sent to schools of all educational phases within the public system, with boys' and girls' schools represented at each phase.

### **3.4.3 Questionnaires to school age students in the public school system**

The questionnaires were piloted with 15 children (representing primary, middle and secondary age levels) to ensure the questions were clearly understood. A sample of students was surveyed from three school regions in Qatar. The intention was to explore the views and impressions of both boys and girls in the primary, middle and secondary phases of education in Qatar in relation to their use of the school library and the role as they saw it, of the librarian. Their views make an important contribution to this study in that historically within Qatar the opinion of young people has not been sought about their education, but when we consider international research into the value and impact of school libraries we can see that the voices of young people form a crucial strand of such studies (see Kulthau, 2004, Gildersleeves, 2012a).

The author used the visits of five School Inspectors as a means of the surveys being distributed to students. The purpose of the survey was explained to the inspectors and each was given 30 copies of the final survey. The questionnaires were taken into those schools which were scheduled to be inspected in March 2006 and were made available

in the school's library for students to opt to complete. Altogether 130 copies of the survey were actually put into 13 school libraries by the inspectors. The research was supported by respected members of the Department of School Libraries at the Ministry of Education and at the Education Institute within the Supreme Education Council, School Principals and staff, including the school librarians, all contributed actively in the promotion and collection of the completed questionnaires. The students were very keen to participate and happily assisted in responding to the survey questions. In total, 110 questionnaires were completed over a one week period during March 2006. The number of students presented in figure 3.1, represent an opportunistic self-selected sample of library users in the given period. As boys and girls are taught separately in Qatar, both boys' and girls' schools representing the different phases were approached.

<b>Phase of School</b>	<b>No of Students</b>	<b>Total %</b>
Primary (7-13 years)	20 boys 20 girls	36.36%
Middle (13-16 years)	12 boys 18 girls	27.27%
Secondary (16-19 years)	17 boys 23 girls	36.36%

**Figure 3.1:** Student responses by school phase

The data were analyzed using SPSS. All questions and data were coded and entered onto a spreadsheet using Excel and then transferred to SPSS for further coding, labeling and valuing prior to analysis.

It is worth noting that as the questionnaires were distributed via school libraries, it is likely that those responding may well have been predisposed to come in to use their school library, particularly if librarians gave out the forms to their 'regulars'. It is acknowledged that this introduces a potential for bias. However, as the author had no control of exactly how the distribution was effected, it is also possible that staff might have asked all students attending a class in their library to complete the forms, thus widening the range of possible responses. A certain degree of randomness was achieved

by the school selection being simply those schools which happened to be scheduled for inspection in March 2006.

**3.4.4. Questionnaires to students studying in the UK and Ireland:** The perceptions and experiences of those involved in provision and study within higher education were obtained by questionnaire. The development of the survey instrument was informed by feedback from the pilot of the survey targeting school students and by the author's informal observation of students based in the United Kingdom in his capacity as Cultural Attaché with responsibility for Qatari students overseas. This group of Qatari students studying in a range of UK and Ireland higher education institutions in 2006 was important in that they were able to compare, contrast and evaluate their experience and preparedness in using libraries to support their undergraduate or postgraduate study. These students were chosen in that they represent a unique experience, having been exposed to different educational systems and library services. Comparison of these experiences with the expectations and experiences of teachers and librarians at the University of Qatar was made possible via the surveys, with a view to identifying areas for skills development.

This survey of UK-based Qatari higher education students allowed a perspective across a range of disciplines by virtue of the variety of subjects these students had chosen to study. However this group cannot be argued to be totally representative of Qatari young people leaving school education, as not all choose to go on into higher education, and those who are supported by the government to attend universities in the United Kingdom and Ireland come from those achieving the highest grades at the school leaving examinations. We can expect this survey sample therefore to represent able young people motivated to learning and continuing their education.

**3.4.5. Questionnaires to lecturers and staff at the University of Qatar:** In addition to the views of school librarians, the opinions and views of lecturers and library staff at the University of Qatar were obtained in 2007 through questionnaires aimed at exploring the extent to which school leavers are equipped for the information demands of the higher education learning environment in Qatar. Sixteen lecturers and fifteen university librarians were chosen to reflect a wide group within the university and to represent

different subject disciplines. Librarians were seen as key since their vital role comes from their ability to judge and evaluate student library skills. Both lecturers and librarians at the university receive the output of schools in Qatar in the form of new students and consequently they are in a position to identify whether students arrive prepared and equipped with the necessary skills to search and use different resources within university library to support their learning. Replies were received from fifteen lecturers and ten librarians.

**3.4.6 Questionnaire to parents:** A small sample of 70 questionnaires was distributed in 2008 with the support of the thirteen independent school principals representing different school phases, girls' and boys' schools and different geographic regions; 64 responses were returned (91.4%). Although limited, the responses were considered representative of educated parents with children of compulsory school age.

In designing and planning questionnaires, Cohen et al. recommend that diverse regional and academic variations need to be taken into account,

*The researcher will need to be clear about what it is that is being represented, i.e. to set the parameter characteristics of the wider population- sampling frame- clearly and correctly (Cohen et al. 2005:98).*

This has been taken into account and is reflected in the fact that the schools and libraries represent the various regions and different academic stages in Qatar and that a numerical parameter was set to include appropriate proportions of each group. The questionnaires used ensured that both factual information and free responses through the use of open-ended questions could be collected. This enabled both quantitative data to be gathered and analysed in addition to qualitative data in the form of the respondents' views. A total of 30 questions were used in the librarians' survey questionnaire; 7 in the University lecturers' and librarians' questionnaires, and 8 in the HEI students' questionnaire.

Overall, the set of survey instruments used for this case study approach comprised:

- Survey questionnaires to 200 school librarians in Qatar in 2004, developed from a pilot questionnaire to 40 school librarians representing all phases of public education in Qatar. Of the 200 sent, 150 replied (75%);
- 130 questionnaires to school students from primary, middle and secondary schools (out of 150 issued for distribution via school inspectors), placed in 13 schools in one week in March 2006. 110 questionnaires were completed by students across the range of phases;
- questionnaires in 2007 to 16 undergraduate lecturers at the University of Qatar, of whom 15 responded;
- questionnaires in 2007 to 15 librarians at the University of Qatar, of whom 10 responded;
- questionnaires in 2006 to 240 undergraduate and postgraduate students studying a wide range of disciplines in 30 Higher Education Institutions in the UK and Europe. Of the 240 sent, only 75 completed surveys were returned (31.25%);
- questionnaires in 2008 to 70 Qatari parents with school age children. 64 replied (91.4%)

### **3.5 Observational visits**

In order to provide a practical insight into comparison of school library models and experiences these interviews and questionnaire surveys have been complemented by a range of observational visits and discussions with school library practitioners in the UK. Morrison (1993) in Cohen et al. notes that observations enable the researcher to gather data on:

- *The physical setting (the physical environment and its organization);*
- *The human setting (the organization of people, the characteristics and make-up of the group);*
- *The interactional setting (interactions taking place, formal, informal, planned, unplanned, verbal, non-verbal);*
- *The programme setting (the resources and their organization, pedagogic styles, curricula and their organization).*

(Morrison in Cohen et al. 2005:305).

Morrison's four categories provided a framework for gathering data when carrying out observations. The author's experience and familiarity with library contexts and terminology ensured that the observations were carried out confidently and that the field notes completed were meaningful.

- i. Ten in-depth school library visits were conducted. Schools represented different school phases, from state and independent sectors, single-sex and mixed education. Examples visited were selected to include representation from Abingdon, Bristol, Leeds, London and Newcastle, providing a variety of city and town contexts and geographical locations.
- ii. One visit to a School Library Support Service (Tower Hamlets Education Library Service) was carried out, with a view to seeing how this type of business subscriptions service offers learning resource and advice support to local schools.
- iii. A visit was made to the independent commercial company Peters Library Suppliers in Birmingham, to discuss how they tailor their services to school libraries, whether by providing resources from which schools may choose their collections, by providing advice support or by offering a fully-outsourced collection service.
- iv. Information has also been gathered through interviews with specialist providers of library software, design, supplies and publishers at a number of international and national conferences and library shows representing the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions; International Association of School Librarianship; American Library Association, the Library and Information Show and the London Book Fair.
- v. Throughout the course of this research, the author also made use of a number of opportunistic discussions, both in Qatar and the UK, with school library practitioners (such as on occasions of group visits to schools organized by conferences attended).

### **3.6 Analysis of data**

The range of data collection methods used has been important in supporting triangulation, allowing for different perspectives to be represented and helping to avoid bias in qualitative research. Cohen et al. define triangulation

*as the use of two or more methods of data collection' and further 'in its use of multiple methods, triangulation may utilize either normative or interpretive techniques; or it may draw on methods from both these approaches and use them in combination (Cohen et al. 2005:112-3).*

Gildersleeves notes that in seeking to explore value and impact of services it is important to bring together quantitative and qualitative techniques and to build in ways of cross-checking evidence, in order to carry out triangulation effectively. She states,

- *First, the use of multiple strategies to collect and examine data allows us to see if consistent results emerge from the investigation. In this case we can be reasonably confident that interpretation will have a valid basis. Differences in findings should alert us to re-examine both the methodology used and the criteria selected, and demand further investigation.*
- *Secondly, by combining different approaches a richer picture of the use and benefits of services is developed. Portfolios of evidence, including lesson plans, children's creative and school work, reading logs, event write-ups, photos, videos and testimonials should be collected as part of both overall and specific targeted evaluation. It is important to get into the habit of recording the 'golden moments' – comments, pupil achievements, community interactions – that crop up outside the formal evaluation process and which bring the service impact to life through personal stories (Gildersleeves 2012b: 213).*

In this, she is corroborating observations made by authorities in research methods in library and information disciplines, e.g. Pickard (2007) and Connaway and Powell (2010).

A range of methods were used to analyse the data collected. Table 3.2 shows the method used in relation to the method of data collected.

<b>Method of Data Collection</b>	<b>Method of Data Processing for Analysis</b>	<b>Response rate (as appropriate)</b>
Literature (English and Arabic)	Scrutiny and analysis	N/A
Documentation (Arabic)	Scrutiny and analysis	N/A
Interviews with policy makers (Ministry – 2005) (Institute of Education – 2007)	Identification of emergent themes from transcription, illustrated by quotations	7
Interviews with independent school Principals (2007)	Identification of emergent themes from transcription, illustrated by quotations	7
Interviews with independent school librarians (2007)	Identification of emergent themes from transcription, illustrated by quotations	7
Interviews with the Principal and Librarian of Ali Bin Talib Independent School (2009)	Identification of emergent themes from transcription, illustrated by quotations	2
Survey questionnaires to public school librarians in Qatar, representing all phases of public education in Qatar (2004)	SPSS Data presented in graphical form and discussed	200 sent, 150 replied (75%)
Survey questionnaire to school age students, distributed to thirteen schools representing three school types (2006)	SPSS samples distributed through inspectors and school librarians	130 distributed, 110 replied (84.6%)
Questionnaires to undergraduate and postgraduate students studying a wide range of disciplines in 30 Higher Education Institutions in the UK and Ireland (2006)	SPSS	240 sent, 75 replied (31.25%)
Questionnaires to lecturers at the University of Qatar (2007)	Excel	16 distributed, 15 replied
Questionnaires to librarians at the University of Qatar (2007)	Excel	15 distributed, 10 replied
Questionnaires to Qatari parents with school age children (2008)	Manual analysis	70 sent, 64 replied (91.42%)
School visits and Observations School Library Support Service in Tower Hamlets Commercial library suppliers Book fairs/specialist providers)	Field notes, documentation, photographs, publicity materials	10 1 1 4

**Figure 3.2:** Overview of Methods of Data Collection

### **3.7 Reflection on the challenges of applying the methodology**

Two key challenges emerged in the carrying out of the research related to:

- the pace of change in the education section;
- the cultural context of politics.

The major challenge was that the research undertaken coincided with a period of major reform in the school sector, bringing both policy change and the transformation of public schools to independent school status. During the period 2005 to 2009 the numbers of independent schools rose from 21 to 102; by the academic year 2009/10 a further 77 were in a transition period operating as ‘semi-independent’ while their staff and facilities were being prepared for independence, and by 2010/11 all schools had migrated to full independence. At the time of conducting the survey of independent schools, in 2006, the sample of thirteen represented 38% of the available schools which had completed the transition to full independent status. It is interesting to note that within this evolving education system all aspects of the curriculum and teaching, management of the school, parental involvement, reporting of student progress, and staffing, have been discussed and reported in policy documents and guidance to schools. The notable exception to this is the role of school libraries which is not commented on in any of these documents.

The cultural context of politics in Qatar during the period of this research has acted as a constraint in several ways: the changing education system has resulted in changes of key personnel responsible for different areas and therefore affected the researcher’s set of contacts, requiring the building of new relationships and contacts which took time; new people lacked the historical context of the way in which school libraries had evolved and changed over time; the politicians themselves were unable to be definitive about approaches and goals because of the rapid evolution of the educational system.

The duration of the period of research activity has itself been both a weakness, and a strength of this study. On the one hand, some of the approach has had to evolve as the Qatari situation has developed. As a result questions asked of the established public school library staff were not directly duplicated when interviewing staff running the independent school libraries. Arguably this does not provide a true comparison of

views between the two systems. However the educational context and school management structures are different and the process of transition has meant that there was no one model across the new independent schools; because staff in the latter were finding their way in the new system, it was more appropriate to be less formal and structured to encourage staff to share their experiences. On the other hand, the ten-year period has been an ideal window to examine the implementation of the education revolution and to see how school libraries have fitted into this process. The research time span has therefore been invaluable for identifying the challenges and opportunities for provision of effective school libraries as the new education system is consolidated.

## **Chapter 4: EXISTING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION OF QATARI SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

**This chapter addresses the research question: ‘What evidence exists of the critical evaluation of the role and effect of school libraries in Qatar, which might be used by policy makers to inform school library development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?’**

In order to answer this question the author sought four types of information:

- existing academic or formal research into school libraries which focused on or included Qatari schools;
- library evaluation studies carried out by school librarians or teachers, perhaps within their own school or through informal collaborations;
- internal government evaluation strategies and reports;
- evidence of research or evaluation processes in other Arab or Middle East countries which might have relevance for Qatari school library development.

The first step involved scanning Arabic and English-language bibliographic databases. In particular the resources of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO); the Arab League's Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALESCO) and Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) were consulted. To this were then added *ERIC* and the *British Education Index*, as being key resources covering American and British writings on the education sector, and *Library and Information Science Abstracts* for its coverage of professional and academic journals, including specialist journals relating to school libraries, such as *The School Librarian* (SLA); *School Libraries Worldwide* (IASL); *Knowledge Quest* (AASL), as well as more general database searches.

### **4.1 Academic or formal research relating to Qatari school libraries**

The search identified four academic studies directly concerned with Qatari school libraries. Two, by Khalifa (1992) and by Al-Swedan (1996) were published and two, by Aboud (1994) and by Al-Emadi (1998) were unpublished. It is interesting to note that the studies by Aboud and Al-Emadi were student-led initiatives as part of degree studies undertaken outside of Qatar and that the author was unable to trace any research pro-

actively commissioned into Qatari school libraries after the enactment of the School Libraries Act in 1992 or in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by either the Ministry of Education or the Supreme Education Council, despite this being a key period of education transition.

Shaban Khalifa, Professor of Library and Information Studies at the University of Qatar, conducted an evaluation of all types of library and information centre in Qatar in 1992. Within this report he included research carried out in collaboration with Fozir Osman on school libraries. Shaban's and Osman's key findings were that school libraries were both under-resourced and under-used, and specifically they identified that 47.3% of school libraries were in need of new buildings and dedicated library space; 50% were in need of new furniture; school librarians were not involved in the selection of the school library collection; staffing was an issue, with a quarter of school librarians in Qatar being part time and the majority not holding any professional library science qualification. Shaban and Osman also found that school libraries were not promoted as a resource for learning and that the general view amongst students was that text-books were the principal aid to their study.

They noted that students had poor reading skills but that they were neither encouraged nor self-motivated to use the library to develop these skills, claiming that they lacked time to do this. Shaban recommended that there should be a compulsory library lesson each week, organized by the school librarian and individual teachers. The aim of this lesson should be to enable students to develop information literacy and research skills. He also proposed that information literacy skills should, as a subject within the school curriculum, be assessed; his findings showed that 90% of librarians who responded to the survey agreed that this was an important strategy for raising the profile of the role of school libraries and their contribution to the curriculum.

Two of the academic studies identified were at Masters' level: by Aboud (1994), carried out at the University of Cairo, and by Al-Emadi (1998), carried out at the University of Wisconsin-La Cross, both examining the use of public school libraries in Qatar. Both were already known to the author from his experience as Head of the School Libraries Department within the Ministry of Education and from the preliminary scanning for this research. These studies, from the decade immediately preceding the focus of this research, each sought to obtain a 'state of the nation' picture of the situation of Qatari

school libraries within the public school system, by capturing a snapshot of a sample of school libraries through consultation with librarians. What is significant here is that despite these studies post-dating formal legislation by the State of Qatar for the provision of libraries and librarians in all schools, both identified very similar issues.

Both raised concerns about the poor physical space provided within school premises, limitations in access to this space (Al-Emadi 1998) and in how the collections offered were managed and developed. Both studies also flagged up a range of challenges for effective school librarians, in particular difficulties around qualifications, training, and status of librarians within the school community and around the cooperation between librarians and their teaching colleagues towards student learning development. Aboud (1994) also found a practical difficulty for school librarians, noting that the majority (over 79%) were part time rather than full-time, which would be likely to have an effect on the time they could plan and collaborate with teachers or make library services available to students.

The fourth study, by Nasser Al-Swedan (1996), was research funded by the Gulf Cooperation Council and provides an important comparative overview of school libraries across the Gulf States, amongst which is Qatar. The aim of this survey-based study was to explore school library provision in the Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. It was based on a sample of public and private elementary, intermediate and secondary schools. The study found that the basic structure of school libraries was poor and that school libraries, where existent, were generally traditional libraries with poor funding, a lack of qualified school librarians and bad services and collections. Al-Swedan recorded that previous studies on the condition of school libraries across the Gulf States showed common issues. These include that school libraries tended to be managed, funded, supervised and controlled by governments with no partnerships to promote school libraries in the region.

Although school libraries in principle were recognized as an important tool of education, library services were found to be inadequate at different educational stages and often school libraries were not considered to be central to the educational and learning process. Further, school librarians were neither qualified nor specialized; budgets of school libraries were small and there was poor collaboration between school

librarians and teachers within the schools themselves. Al-Swedan further commented that the absence of professional organizations that represent librarians and their interests and the general experience of librarians created an uncertainty of the role of the school librarian.

## 4.2 Conferences

Three key conferences were also identified. In 1998 the Arab League's Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALESCO) held a conference on the *Role of School Libraries in the Future*, with a follow-up conference *The Role of School Libraries in the Future: Their Contribution to Education and Culture*, two years later in Tunis. The Qatar Ministry of Education collaborated with UNESCO to run a conference in Doha on *The Role of the School Library in the Education System* in 2000. The conferences are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 below in the light of their relationship to Qatari education policy and school library development. The paper presented by the author, (Al-Kaabi, 1998) at the ALESCO 1998 conference made use of the findings of school inspectors' reports from that year to inform discussion of school library provision. However, the author has been unable to identify other examples of systematic use of available Qatari evaluation data as part of published debate within or outside Qatar.

The survey produced as an outcome of the 1998 ALESCO conference explored key issues in relation to seventeen Arabic countries and, on the basis of these, drew up a set of common principles and recommendations. Table 4.1 (below) shows the spread of schools and librarians across the Arab countries that attended the conference.

Two sets of recommendations were presented as a result of the conference, one relating to the Arabic countries and the other relating to the organization itself:

- i. The recommendations for school libraries in the Arabic countries identified plans for the mid and long term development of school libraries and stressed that each school should have a school library. Key areas were highlighted, such as: the importance of librarians and teachers collaborating together to support the curriculum; the adequacy of the budget; the computerization of school libraries; libraries as resource centres meeting international standards; the layout and furnishing of library spaces; the need for

additional training of librarians; the librarian as 'information specialist' with a designated role and responsibility; the importance of library skills in developing students as independent learners, and, changing the perceptions of local communities in the way they view school libraries.

ii. ALESCO's recommendations for its own organization were that they should put into place plans for the short and mid-term development of school libraries in the Arabic countries; set standards in the Arabic language for Arabic school libraries based on international standards; provide financial support for school libraries; provide training programmes for school librarians, and, introduce a prize for school libraries exemplifying 'good practice'.

Country	No. of Libraries	No. of Librarians
Algeria	*	*
Egypt	13,417	9,948
Iraq	8,893	8,893
Jordan	2,725	2,255
Kuwait	543	826
Lebanon	*	*
Libya	540	1180
Mauritania	48	*
Morocco	1301	874
Oman	297	198
Palestine	1,114	*
Qatar	196	230
Saudi Arabia	5,442	5,442
Sudan	*	*
Syria	10,675	4,225
Tunis	817	610
Yemen	*	68

\* denotes no information available

**Figure 4.1:** Libraries and Librarians in Arabic Countries (1998)

Unfortunately, despite more than ten years passing since this conference and its successor in 2000, ALESCO has still not put into place any strategy for school libraries or published standards which could be promoted and used in schools across the Arab countries. There is therefore no strong body of guidance with a detailed understanding of the needs of Arab countries which could be used as evaluation and strategy to inform policy makers, which is published and available to Qatar from the organization most like a professional librarianship body in the Arab world.

#### **4.3 Qatari professional evaluations and reflections on school libraries**

No reflective articles or evaluation reports published by Qatari school librarians were identified in any of the bibliographic sources. This is consistent with the lack of any organization representing information professionals, let alone specifically school librarians, in Qatar. This bears out Al-Swedan's observation in the previous decade about the absence of professional library bodies to advocate for the role of school libraries and librarians. This may be contrasted with the wealth of articles which can be found in countries such as the United States of America or the United Kingdom, and which are contributed to academic and professional journals or to school library organization newsletters, blogs and other informal information networks, offering case studies of local projects or small-scale research studies conducted by a school librarian within their own school. It is possible that this absence may also reflect a past cultural approach in which the expectation would be that any such publication would only be part of a government-authorised study. Equally, it is possible that training of library staff in Qatar – whether at degree and professional level or at a lower level – has not tended to emphasize the benefit of librarians actively seeking to share their experiences and best practice through published channels and so there has not been any developed culture of reflective writing or evaluation studies.

#### **4.4 Government documentation**

In the public school system before 2002 all research on school libraries in Qatar had to be formally authorised by the Minister of Education and the Department of School Libraries within the Ministry of Education. The Minister of Education and the Head of the Department of School Libraries were interviewed and both reported that no

research had been authorised by them other than the studies by Aboud (1994), Al-Swedan (1996) and Al-Emadi (1998). Since then no other research had been authorised, either by the Ministry of Education or its successor the Supreme Education Council, other than the current research carried out by the author.

The search was therefore extended to cover government documentation more generally to identify material relating to policy, guidelines and regulations which might shed light on existing evaluation approaches. In order to carry out this analysis of existing official documents, government reports, plans and regulations, access to these documents was formally requested from the Deputy Minister of Education and from the Supreme Education Council and exceptionally, granted. The Ministry of Education archive was searched for the periods of 1964-2002 and post-2002 to 2009. Supreme Education Council holdings were also examined for the period 2002 onwards. It was necessary to cover this overlap of the post-2002 period because of the parallel and transitional nature of the two education systems. Throughout the duration of this research study the two bodies have a complex and evolving relationship and overlapping areas of school responsibility.

This provided an up to date overview set within a historical context (discussed in the following Chapter 5 addressing the second research question about education policy and school libraries). The information identified encompassed governmental statistics on education in general and relating to school library funding, collections, equipment and furnishings. It also included documentation relating to the development of education generally in Qatar, with specific subsections relating to school libraries, staffing–roles and responsibilities, training and salaries. Additionally, a variety of internal Ministry of Education memos relating to libraries was found.

A quantity of specific school library focused documentation was identified for the 1990s, in particular the Ministry of Education *School Libraries Act 1992*, *Department of School Libraries Guidelines* (December 1992), and *Teaching Library Skills in Schools in the State of Qatar* (1998). The School Libraries Act and the Guidelines make some provision for inspection of services and library staff (discussed in detail in Chapter 6) but do not include much detail on evaluation of school library services overall or an identifiable mechanism for periodic publication of a ‘state of the nation’ review of

school libraries. A certain amount of information was identified which presented the findings of school inspectors on auditing of collections and observation of school libraries and librarians or summarised evaluation of training courses attended by librarians, but this was only in the form of internal reports.

More recently, driven by the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza Bint Nassar Al-Misnid in her capacity as President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and as Vice-President of the Supreme Education Council, the post-2002 period has given rise to considerable documentation concerning education vision, strategy and statistics, including the ongoing series publication of *Annual Government Statistics of Education*, the *Development of Education: National Report of the State of Qatar* (QMoE, 2008), the *National Plan: Education for All in the State of Qatar (2001-2015)* and *Qatar National Vision 2030* (QDSGP, 2008). However, as yet there are no specific government reports providing any overview of vision for school libraries or in-depth assessment of their potential. Interestingly, very recently (2012) internal discussions have begun to take place within the wider context of the Qatar Foundation and British Library partnership for development of the Qatar National Library and the role of school libraries in enabling student access to digital archives. As yet these discussions are at too early a stage to involve any commissioned evaluation studies of school libraries, and indeed the discussions are likely to be informed by the findings of this doctoral research.

#### **4.5 School libraries in the Middle East**

A small number of studies relating to other Middle East school libraries was identified, many of which considered the position of school libraries in Saudi Arabia, but also Iran and Oman. Most of these were from the 1980s and had also been noted by Al-Swedan.

These Saudi studies include:

- i. Alosaimi (1980) examined the management of school libraries in five public schools in Taif City. His study found that secondary school library services were very poor and that the school librarians of these schools were neither specialized in library and information science, nor were they full time librarians;

- ii. Hashem (1984) reviewed the situation of school libraries in 58 schools in the western region of Saudi Arabia. His study found that the school libraries were not designed in accordance with the educational standards. The study also found that part time librarians who supervised these libraries were also responsible for teaching other subjects at the relevant school;
- iii. Banajah (1986) conducted a survey in 18 public schools and 4 private schools and confirmed a similar situation. The findings obtained from this survey-based study found that the physical facilities of libraries did not meet the standards of school libraries services and that 34% of librarians had not specialized in librarianship;
- vi. Marghalani (1986) analysed the perception of secondary school library managers about school library development. His study found that the role of the school library was not recognized in the educational process. It also highlighted the weakness of school library information sources collection.

Similar results were found by Al-Berican (1987) who conducted a survey in 20 girls' schools in the City of Riyadh. The study found that there was a shortage in the library budget, weakness' in the role of school managements and that the school librarians had no power to insist that teachers and students should use the school library, additionally there was no integration of the school library with the curriculum and its role was not recognized in the educational process.

School libraries in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are administered by the government's Ministry of Education. The *Learning Resource Centres Project* (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia MoE, 2001) presents a historical overview of the development of learning resource centres from 1970 to 2001. In 1970 The Saudi Ministry of Education established the School Library Management Team to supervise school library services, determine the school library objectives and to promote the importance of school libraries in the educational process. In 1973 a *School Library Bulletin* was issued to help bring the efforts of librarians together and to organize the activities of school libraries in the country. During the period 1975 to 1980 the School Library Management Team produced a plan that aimed at expanding the services of school libraries. The 1990s

witnessed further expansion and more appreciation of the role of the school library. An example of this was expressed by the Saudi Ministry of Education when it introduced library skills as a subject to be taught within secondary schools in the Kingdom. Included in these changes were the changes in the name of the Department of School Libraries to the Learning Resources Administration, a change that signaled the move towards the adoption of technology in learning at different levels at schools, aimed at providing students with information and resource searching practice. It was the intention of the Saudi Ministry of Education to develop school libraries and to introduce information technology to facilitate educational development. By 2000 the Saudi Ministry of Education was piloting the ‘School Net Project’, aimed at connecting all schools and educational districts through a Wide Area Network (WAN) in order to provide students, teachers and parents with services and digital information sources such as children’s performance and statistics and to open discussion with interested parties. Utilizing such services students would be able to have access to educational sites, combine the use of IT with learning and to interact with teachers. Moreover, the project was expected to provide approximately one million students with IT access with a ratio of one PC for every ten students. The Saudi Ministry of Education also launched a project in 2001 with the aim of establishing resource centres in schools managed by a qualified librarian with knowledge of information technology science and learning resources and issued guidelines on how these resource centres would be furnished and equipped in accordance with the highest standards. Six schools were chosen in Riyadh as pilot sites. These guidelines state that in order to launch this experimental stage,

*learning centres sites will be determined, furnished and equipped and provided with educational information that relates to the curriculum, and librarians will be trained to work in such libraries. After completion of the experiment, evaluation will be undertaken to determine the advantages and disadvantages of such libraries. A decision on the continuing establishing of such learning resources centres will offer consideration of how successful the experiment has been* (Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education, 2001).

Although the author has been unable to identify any published evaluation of this pilot or subsequent implementation of the proposed initiative, Arif Bokhari, in his study two years later of school libraries in boys' schools in Saudi Arabia, identified that 92.7% of Saudi school librarians felt that the Saudi Arabian Schools Net project could play a significant part in developing the learning environment (Bokhari 2003:156). His study

however concluded that school libraries were generally poor and had limited collections; that there was an absence of full-time qualified librarians and too often they were neither skilled nor trained. Furthermore he argued that the lack of IT and funding was having an impact implementation of the project and on student learning. His recommendations were that school librarians should be seen as an important part of the school educational team and that they should have appropriate qualifications in library and information science and access to further in-service training.

Two studies taking a slightly different approach are Lohrer's 1972 investigation of libraries generally in Iran and the much more recent study by Bouazza and Al-Mufaraji (2005) surveying the use of the school library by teachers in Oman.

Lohrer (1972) noted that although one would turn to the Middle East to obtain the earliest records of great libraries of the ancient world, in contrast modern well-organized libraries providing services to readers of all ages were surprisingly lacking. He noted that illiteracy, limited published materials in the native languages, lack of publishing houses and limited professional library personnel contributed to the meager status of libraries and librarians, even though countries such as Egypt, Iran and Lebanon had established degree programmes of library education.

The results of the survey by Bouazza and Al-Mufaraji (2005) found that there was a low use of school libraries by teachers. It also revealed that school libraries held poor collections, especially of audiovisual materials, journals, electronic resources and access to the internet. Interestingly, the survey results indicated 'that there were significant differences in the frequency of library use between male teachers and female teachers' (2005:143). It showed that more male teachers used the library daily and at least once a week, whilst more female teachers used the library once a month and rarely. Further, more female than male teachers were likely to look for information in the library, whereas male teachers were more inclined to borrow books. The survey concluded that most of the collections found in the Omani school libraries were outdated and did not meet the need of the teaching curriculum. In addition, despite this study being conducted in 2005, all 302 teachers in the survey reported that they had no access to computing facilities within their school libraries. Overall the authors commented that

the situation of school libraries in Oman was "disappointing" when taken from the perspective of teachers' use of school library's services and facilities.

When we compare the picture from Bouazza and Al-Mufaraji in Oman with the criticisms of library provision and quality of staffing identified 33 years earlier in Iran by Lohrer we might hope to see significant change. Disappointingly, even through the different focus of these studies a pattern of continuing limited provision and understanding of the value of school libraries continues, which seems to be confirmed by many of the intervening studies from Middle East and North African countries, despite pan-Arabic conferences on school libraries, advances in education goals and in internet technology. While several of these studies identified the picture of service provision at the time of research, an interesting issue which emerges through this body of research is that there was a lack of connecting school libraries to underlying educational policy and standards and a lack of recognition of the place of school libraries in the education process. This suggests that there is a lack of awareness both by school librarians and by those in ministerial positions in education departments of the importance of evaluation research to understand how school libraries can give benefit to learning. The study by Bouazza and Al-Mufaraji is interesting because it looked at how actual users, in this case how teachers used their library. By doing this it addressed an important part of the chain of participation needed to connect school management and students with the school library.

In summary, the Arabic studies found relating to Qatar were dated, being concerned with the pre-2002 period only, and focused solely on the perceptions of librarians. Although they were interesting, they did not include the views of Ministry policy makers, students or the wider community; nor did they incorporate the information technology literacy aspect of today's school libraries. As a consequence, education policy advisors, policy makers and officials concerned with budget allocation have lacked an up to date overview of the current position to help frame their strategy decisions and planning for public schools in Qatar. Further, data that existed in terms of internal reports that originated from the Department of School Libraries (such as inspection of school libraries, evaluation of training courses attended by librarians, observation of public school libraries and auditing of collections carried out by school

inspectors) do not appear to have been used to inform future needs, funding or to develop public school libraries.

#### **4.6 Conclusions from Chapter 4**

**The process of addressing the first research question has therefore revealed five key points:**

1. There seems to be a lack of systematic review of library contribution into education (in Qatar and more widely in Arabic nations), especially in trying to understand how libraries help to deliver education goals and add value to teachers' teaching and students' learning.
2. Access to much of the relevant research and information is largely restricted to high-ranking members of government departments, which both places considerable onus on a small number of individuals and limits the usefulness of the information to school principals and librarians; further, where official posts and personnel have changed as Government structures have changed in the period under study, the continuity of awareness of individuals of the range of reports and information available is compromised.
3. Although both archived and current information exist, this is considerably fragmented, limiting an ongoing and coherent picture which could ease the task of policy makers and practitioners; this is complicated by the overlapping parallel operation of the Ministry of Education and Supreme Education Council during much of the period under study.
4. There is a lack of culture amongst school librarians towards self-evaluation of services or sharing of practical experience which could benefit the school library community at large.
5. This lack of culture and lack of targeted and ongoing school library research may well be linked to a lack of a single organization with professional responsibility for libraries overall, and more specifically school libraries.

## **Chapter 5: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QATARI EDUCATION POLICY AND SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

**This chapter addresses the second research question: How has the development of education policy within Qatar influenced the role and activity of school libraries within the last thirty years?**

This chapter is informed by data drawn from policy documents and information related to education and libraries for the periods of 1964-2002, and post-2002. This is combined with research relating to Qatar such as that of Kuwari (1995) who sets out the evolution of education and Hilall (1995) who examines the developing role of school libraries, together with empirical research gathered as part of this study.

### **5.1 The Qatari context**

The State of Qatar is a peninsula situated half way along the west coast of the Arabian Gulf, east of the Arabian Peninsula, extending northward covering an area of 11,437 square kilometers. The people of Qatar are primarily of Arab descent, reflecting both the country's close proximity to the Arabian Peninsula and its ties of history, language and religion with other Gulf States where Islam is the predominant religion.

On December 18<sup>th</sup> 1971, Qatar gained its independence from Britain and shortly afterwards the country joined the Arab League and the United Nations. Currently, Qatar is an active state member in various regional and international organizations. The country has chosen to follow a path leading towards the modernization of industry, economy, education, foreign policy and the media. Qatar is now recognized in the Middle East as achieving greater advancement in these areas as compared to the neighboring Gulf countries.

Modernisation has been driven by the exportation of oil and natural gas and from revenues generated by oil-related complementary industries. The North Gas oil field has made a significant contribution, not only to Qatar's national economy but also to the international oil trade and industry, producing oil and reserves of 500 trillion cubic feet

is considered to be the largest concentration of natural gas on earth placing Qatar among the top five countries in the world in terms of the largest gas reserves.

This resource has enabled Qatar to provide a high level of social welfare, education and health which are provided free of charge to the population. The statistical returns show that 30% of the total government expenditure 2001, taken from the Qatar Ministry of Education Annual Report 2000-2002 (QMoE, 2002), was allocated to the educational sector, including the University of Qatar. Despite the rapid increase of uptake of education experienced by oil-rich nations between 1965 and 1990, Akkari (2004) in a paper entitled *Education in the Middle East and North Africa* identified Qatar as among the poorest-ranked Arabic nations by Oxfam's Educational Performance Index – a measure of correlation between national economic potential and basic educational benefit (Akkari, 2004:148). This focuses on three aspects deemed to have a critical role in the performance of education systems, namely elementary school enrolment, the gender balance in population enrolling for elementary education and the proportion of children progressing beyond Fourth Grade. However by 2012 the World Economic Forum *Global Competitiveness Report 2012-13* (Schwab, 2012) identified that Qatar had retained its position of fourth place out of 142 countries for the quality of its education system.

Like every other aspect of life in Qatar, education in the country stems from an Islamic belief, influenced by the intellectual and cultural legacy of its Arab-Islamic roots. During the last few decades the educational sector has witnessed dramatic changes that developed the educational system from private religious teaching of Quran and Islamic principles, to modern education at schools. Historically, people in Qatar have had a great respect for teachers and Imams (religious scholars) as the providers of knowledge, which centred on lessons from the Holy Qur'an in the local mosques. This knowledge is taught in a formal manner, where students are required to listen and demonstrate their knowledge rather than encouraging them to interact and contribute to discussion. As a consequence most of the older generation had the view that the student should obtain all their knowledge directly from teachers. In this perception, students are passive consumers of teaching rather than active, independent learners. Culturally and historically, libraries have not played much of a role in the education of the people of Qatar – something paralleled in Akkari's finding that access to books, newspapers and

libraries was generally very limited in Middle East and North African countries (Akkari, 2004:147).

## **5.2 The evolution of schools and school libraries in Qatar**

Although the State of Qatar was founded in 1936, the state education system was not set up until 1952. Kuwari, writing in 1995, identified three key phases; however this study proposes that a fourth phase is now taking place, with the setting up of the Supreme Education Council in 2002. As a result of the policy initiatives set in motion by this Body, there has been rapid change and development in education. These are framed in vision, policy and practice and have been driven by Her Highness Shaikha Moza Bint Nasser Al-Misnid in her capacity as President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and Vice President of the Supreme Education Council, and are discussed below.

The three phases of evolution in the Qatari educational system identified by Kuwari (1995) are: the Foundation Phase (1952-1971); the Expansion Phase (1971-1980) and the Recession Phase (1981-1995). For the purposes of discussion these phases are adopted here, with the extension of the recession phase from 1981 through to 2000. To these must be added a further phase covering the significant developments that have taken place in education in the period since 2001 and the vision of the future set out in the *Qatar National Vision 2030* (QGSDP, 2008).

### **5.2.1 The Foundation Phase (1952-1971)**

Kuwari defined this phase as characterized by: the teaching of the Koran and other Arabic subjects provided by religious scholars in the mosques (Muktabah); the introduction of State education in 1952; the establishment of the Ministry of Education in 1956 and the formation of the Qatar educational system.

Historically, Qatar's experience with education can be traced to its earliest days when only privately-funded education was available for both genders. The setting up of the first state-funded boys' primary school - with a school library - marked the beginning of the formal governmental educational system. In 1956, the basis of a modern school programme that defined the three main stages of education (elementary, preparatory and

secondary) was laid down (Ghanaim, 1992) with the first pupils obtained their primary school certificates in 1958 (Al-Madani 1958). Today in 2012, these three stages remain essentially the same, and are outlined below. At the time of the early phase of state education the key priorities were to ensure that all Qatari children had access to primary level education and were functionally literate when they left primary school. Libraries, where they existed, were not identified as playing a role in developing literacy.

The establishment of the Doha Technical School, the Commercial Secondary School, the Teacher Training Institute and the Institute of Religious Studies, all of which began classes between 1956 and 1966, served the purpose of extending the range of educational provision, as well as broadening the skills base of the population. Kuwari notes that in 1964-1965, the Ministry records show that sixty-five schools were in existence, each with a school library (thirty-seven in Doha and twenty-eight in the rest of the country); by the period 1966-1967, this had increased to seventy-one in total (Kuwari, 1995).

The Department of Knowledge set up the Qatar National Library in 1963 which, in addition to its specialist national collection role, had a separate school library section charged with the responsibility for looking after school libraries in Qatar. This was the first mention of the concept of the school library in Qatar education history.

### **5.2.2 Expansion phase (1971-1980)**

Kuwari outlines how in the early 1970s, this school library section separated from the Qatar National Library to become a section of the Ministry of Education, with its own budget. This enabled the school library section to have a direct access to school libraries, to formulate policy and to advise and inspect provision. The 1970s saw the important free provision of facilities such as textbooks and transport to schools; the establishment of Kindergartens in 1972; a growth in the number of schools with school libraries both for boys and for girls in 1976; the establishment of the Teachers' College in 1973 and the Institute of Language in 1973 which then transformed into the University of Qatar in 1977; and finally the establishment of specialized institutions and vocational training centres responsible for the training of teachers (Kuwari, 1995:15; 42).

It is interesting to note that this training was aimed only at teachers. School librarians, in contrast, were appointed from among graduates of the Faculty of History and Library Sciences of the University of Qatar. Of the one hundred and twenty male and female students who graduated each year from this combined degree, the University of Qatar records show that overall, approximately five men and fifty to sixty women have been appointed as school librarians; four or five men and about twenty women have been appointed as university librarians; the remaining graduates were appointed to a range of Ministry posts. The Library Science part of the degree was taken as a minor option, and focused on the collection, organization and retrieval of information, supporting the user as a researcher (especially where users were university students) and the conservation of books. This situating of librarianship as a subsidiary part of historical studies arguably reflects the simplistic perception of a library as essentially a storehouse of materials preserved and provided as a resource for use in study identified by Ray (1982) and Khan (2009) as a stage in library development which links also with an understanding of education as a process of transmission of information from the expert teacher to the receiving student. The combination degree did not cover pedagogic theory, child development or other aspects specifically aimed at the support of teaching and learning within schools. It should be noted that this emphasis did not change until in 1995 the qualification became a library and information degree in its own right, taught by the Faculty of Library and Information Science at the University of Qatar. At that point students could pursue an interest in school librarianship.

### **5.2.3 Recession phase (1981- 2000)**

Kuwari identifies the main characteristic of the period 1981-1995 as a steady decrease in government funding due to the decline in state revenues and the crisis of the first and second Gulf Wars (Kuwari, 1995:57). As a result of this, educational institutions were negatively affected and the budget and expenditure of the Ministry of Education reduced, affecting all departments. These cuts in budget resulted in huge shortages in resources and also affected the money available to educational establishments in the country such as schools, libraries and maintenance, requiring headteachers to prioritize between staffing and resources. As an example, the author observed at first hand during this period that in order to cope, new measures were implemented which did not affect the salaries of existing teachers or the training of new teachers, but did result in new

female teachers being appointed at lower salaries. The need to encourage men into teaching meant that the salaries of male teachers were not affected during this period. There were no changes to the salaries of school librarians who were already paid at a rate that was much lower than that of teachers, even on the new downscaled rates.

At the same time during the 1980s, the Ministry of Education formulated more ambitious goals which extended existing priorities and which included creating learning and educational links between the State of Qatar and the rest of the world aimed at using education to achieve the ambitions of Qatari society. Al-Khalifi (1995:30) reports that of the two hundred and ten schools which existed across all stages in the year 1988-1989, one hundred and seventy had school libraries (80.9%). Further, in 1989/90 the educational system was evaluated and its objectives were re-defined by experts from UNESCO. As a result, the following objectives were added:

- i. to develop learners' appreciation of beauty and sense of the arts;*
- ii. to raise the cultural awareness of educated people;*
- iii. to adopt a policy of openness towards other cultures.*

(Al-Khalifi 1995:26) [translated from the Arabic]

These new objectives can be seen to have implications for the development of pupils' information skills and for pupil access to and engagement with a range of artistic and cultural resources and experiences. There was therefore great potential for school libraries to be able to support and deliver towards these goals, but this library role was not specifically identified as part of the shift in education policy.

During the recession phase, the expanded vision of education was driven by a need for more effective use of existing funding. During this period, educational reform policy was introduced with the purpose of improving school resources, reviewing IT needs, revising textbooks, expanding libraries and rehabilitating laboratories, as well as introducing a new educational policy that was aimed at developing curricula and enforcing discipline (Al-Mulla, 2003). However, all of these ambitious goals and aspirations were restricted and threatened by the limited budgetary resources.

A key piece of legislation that was introduced during this period was the *School Libraries Act* (1992). It was recognized that school libraries had an important part to play in developing a literate society and in helping the government in achieving its educational aspirations. The preface to the Act by the Minister of Education (QMoE 1992:3) makes two key points: the importance of ‘learning to learn’, freeing students from the monopoly of the textbook so that they become independent learners, and a new vision for school libraries changing from their traditional role to become Learning Resource Centres. The Ministry of Education was informed by UNESCO guidance, and was actively involved in developing the quality of school libraries, stating that ‘The Act is just the beginning of the development of school libraries’ (QMoE 1992:3). This recognition of the role of school libraries reflects the shift in pedagogic theory from the transmission/receiver view to a constructivist model.

The School Libraries Act (1992) was followed by the *Ten Year Plan for the Development of School Libraries 1995-2005* (QMoE 1995). This was an internal Department of School Libraries strategy document. The aims of the Ten Year Plan were to create in-depth scientific and information knowledge of Qatari students and to give priority to a more evaluative approach in learning by linking theory with practice and developing student talents in terms of measurement and observation. In addition, the Plan aimed to foster personal learning, individual student talents and interests and developing independent learners, stating

*The responsibility and the role of the school library in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is to support the development of a modern education system that encourages students to become active and independent learners to be able to research and to find out information throughout their lives. For these reasons we acknowledge the central role of the school library in supporting learning through the collection and the wide range of audio-visual resources within the library*  
(QMoE 1995:2) [translated from the Arabic]

In 1998, a conference: ‘*The role of the school libraries in the future: their contribution to education and culture*’ was held by ALESCO in Tunis. A paper presented by Al-Kaabi on behalf of the Ministry of Education (School Inspection) examined the contribution of school libraries to the education system in Qatar and drew attention to the impact of poor resourcing during the period 1992-1998 on the educational aspirations set out in the 1992 School Libraries Act (Al-Kaabi, 1998). The author drew

on systematic school inspection data gathered from nine school inspectors during the year 1998, highlighting the gap between the library service within the Ministry of Education and other departments; inadequacy of funds for school libraries and collections; poorly trained staff, and the physical condition of school libraries. He highlighted the expansion during the period 1990-1998 in the School Library Department in the Ministry of Education which had increased in size to a staff of 24 specialists with responsibility for staffing, the collection, the budget for all school libraries, technical tasks such as cataloguing and statistics, maintaining the Ministry of Education library itself, the provision of courses for professional development of staff and the inspection of all public school libraries (Al-Kaabi, 1998) This centralized provision had both positive and negative aspects: positive in terms of librarians being supported, developed and inspected by a central team able to make recommendations for the development of school libraries to head-teachers, and negative in terms of a nationally centralized stock selection that at times did not meet individual school needs.

The discussions that followed the paper revealed that there were a wide range of differences in other ALESCO countries: for example, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Kuwait shared similar experiences to Qatar, whereas Egypt reported that they were ahead in reading development; Syria and Jordan reported that they were ‘more caring’ of their librarians, offering more training. The Gulf reported that their librarians were better paid, in contrast to the Yemen, Palestine and Sudan where library provision and training for librarians was very basic. All acknowledged that the salaries paid to librarians were below those of teachers.

In 2000, the School Libraries Department of the Ministry of Education collaborated with UNESCO to hold a two day conference in Doha titled ‘The role of the school library in the education system’ aimed at presenting the recommendations from a number of experts from Qatar. Al-Kaabi reminded the audience that ‘the school library is the place where young children form their reading habits’ (Al-Kaabi, 2000:92) [in Arabic]. The discussions that took place at this conference illustrated the experience, depth of knowledge and the concerns of the participants. It was evident that the conference attracted school library practitioners from across a wide range of responsibility, with representatives from government departments and individual school librarians. This conference was especially valuable in bringing together this mix and

giving an opportunity for participants to learn from each other informally as well as from the papers presented. Key concerns relating to both the role of the school library and the librarian in supporting learning and the need to raise the status of the librarian in school through training were raised.

The key points made recommended that policy makers

- i. should look at the school library as a central part of the school community;*
- ii. recognize the role and training needs of school librarians and support them technically and financially;*
- iii. support the school libraries with appropriate funding*

(Al-Kaabi, 2000:92) [translated from the Arabic]

The Head of the Department of Information and Library Science at the University of Qatar called for:

- i. the need for specialist school librarian training, reminding the audience that a wide range of training that could be delivered within Qatar, but also through The Arabic Libraries Association;*
- ii. paid continuing professional development;*
- iii. valuing the specialist trained librarian;*
- iv. greater understanding by policy makers of the contribution and wider role of the modern school library*

(Al-Sabgh, 2000:109) [translated from the Arabic]

Although the recommendations from the two day UNESCO-sponsored conference were passed on to the Ministry of Education, unfortunately they were not acted upon at the time, and the changing priorities of the Supreme Education Council offered no opportunity to influence policy makers in this area at that time. This lack of follow up may have occurred because the concerns raised were lost in the confusion of the rapid process of transition, or possibly a reflection of the shift of policy influence away from the Ministry of Education to the Supreme Education Council since the conference had been a Ministry-sponsored initiative and so its findings may have seemed irrelevant to the priorities of the new department.

It was interesting to note that the report covering the period 2001-2004, *Efforts and achievements of the Ministry of Education in the State of Qatar, relating to human rights and the application of the International Declaration of Human Rights and its essential freedoms* (presented at a meeting in Geneva, 2004) proposed detailed reforms to the legal framework of education, and set in place initiatives towards children's rights at school, citizenship, curriculum development and inclusion of special needs (QMoe 2004: 4-5). As part of this the report particularly identified priorities in tackling illiteracy, developing ICT skills in learning and support for vocational skills in education (QMoe 2004:5; 31; 35). However, despite the wide-ranging scope of educational initiatives covered, the report did not mention any aspect of school library provision and its contribution to achieving the educational goals of the country, or the training of those delivering library services in schools. Nor were school libraries included in the list of facilities distinguishing "the scholastic environment" (QMoe 2004:20).

It is evident that these conferences were a useful way of bringing practitioners and policy makers together and of highlighting issues, but – as noted in Chapter 4 above – the problem is how to ensure that recommendations made from such events are actually put into effect. While such conferences may be motivational, it seems that if there is too much of a difference in local circumstances or political opportunity, there is a risk that they may only be 'talking shops'. Under pressure of recession and change in education strategy, it seems easy to let libraries slip out of sight. Arguably a key problem with such conferences, whether the ALESCO events or the Doha conference, was that they concentrated on bringing together policy makers and practitioners from the school library field, rather than bringing the school library perspective into education policy conferences and so possibly even with good intentions the issues remained peripheral to the concerns of educationalists.

#### **5.2.4 Phase 4: The vision for the future (2001-2030)**

2000 saw the preparation for the Supreme Education Council and the implementation of a decentralized education system giving greater independence to headteachers in managing their schools, staffing and resources. As a consequence there has been a

succession of decrees and policy statements defining educational vision and priorities in the last decade.

The Emiri Decree No 37 for 2002 established the Supreme Education Council with the responsibility of drawing up the country's educational policy and development plans in light of the country's needs for human resources. The Government placed education development firmly among the national priorities, and adopted an initiative for developing general education under the motto 'Education for All'. Education was identified as:

*'promoting national principles, values and priorities, rendering the classroom an attractive place for learning, encouraging students to make the maximum use of their abilities and talents, assigning schools with the responsibility of improving performance standards, motivating parents and responding to their ambitions in order to help them take part in the educational process, and to create a young generation qualified for university education and the national and international labour market'*  
(QMoE, 2004:5).

Article 25 issued in September 2001 focused on the high priority that Qatar placed on children within the compulsory education system, as a means of growing Qatar as a leader in education and social development, stating

*Education is an essential pillar, which helps in achieving progress in society*  
(QMoE 2004:3).

Article 49 expanded this aim, to include

- i. All Qatari citizens should be trained in the rights of citizenship and societal and political participation;*
- ii. Enabling the learners to be perfect at the essentials of learning (Reading, writing, calculating);*
- iii. Enhancing the attitudes and skills of self-education so as to reach a society that seeks knowledge constantly;*
- iv. Learners' abilities should be developed in creation, invention, practical thinking and its practical applications.*

(QMoE 2004:3-5).

The National Plan 'Education for All' in the State of Qatar (2001-2015) took this focus further by identifying strategic policy relating to the development of improved education provision to include the elderly and the eradication of adult illiteracy. The

National Plan aimed to transform the former state funded public schools to Independent Schools under the New Era Initiative (2004/2005) guided by four major principles: Independence, Accountability, Diversity and Choice, which would allow schools the freedom to choose their educational philosophy and methods of teaching (Qatar Planning Council, 2006:61-62).

The Qatar National Vision 2030 presents a vision for future development. Within it an educated population is singled out as part of ‘The First Pillar: Human Development’ stating,

*‘Qatar aims to build a modern world-class educational system that provides students with a first rate education, comparable to that offered anywhere in the world. The system will provide citizens with excellent training and opportunities to develop to their full potential, preparing them for success in a changing world with increasingly complex technical requirements. The system will also encourage analytical and critical thinking, as well as creativity and innovation’*  
(QGSDP 2008:13).

This ‘world-class educational system’ is defined as including:

*‘Educational curricula and training programs responding to the current and future needs of the labour market; high quality education and training opportunities appropriate to each individual’s aspirations and abilities, and accessible educational programs for life-long learning’* (QGSDP 2008:16).

Additionally, the reforms require educational institutions (which may be taken to include all of schools, higher education and research institutions) to be

*‘well-developed, independent, self-managing and accountable, operating under centrally determined guidelines’;*

supported by:

*‘an effective system for funding scientific research shared by the public and private sectors and conducted in cooperation with specialized international organizations and leading international research centres’,*

enabling the country to play:

*‘a significant international role in cultural and intellectual activity and scientific research’* (QGSDP 2008:16).

In examining the aspirations of these decrees, national plans and vision together, it could be argued with confidence that effective library provision is critical to achieving

this vision for education development in Qatar, and that the foundation lies with the development of libraries in schools which may enable students to acquire reading and information literacy skills and cultural awareness in addition to understanding the importance of libraries to their personal learning and achievement throughout life. If students are to be encouraged to develop within their ‘individual aspirations and abilities’ (QGSDP 2008:16) this suggests that school teaching approaches need to be able to respond to different learning capabilities and the school library could play an important part in offering differentiated resources and learning environment. It might be possible also to consider how school libraries could, through student and parent involvement, contribute into wider family literacy. This in turn raises implications for what is effective provision and how school libraries are managed and recognized and allowed to make this key contribution into national and individual learning. If the school library is to be a focal learning and cultural engagement point for wider society, this also raises questions about the suitability and accessibility of the library space and collections. It is interesting, therefore that during the key policy development period of 2000-2010, school libraries do not receive a mention in the various policy statements.

### **5.3 An overview of the structure of the current Qatar education system**

Qatar follows a policy of compulsory education until the end of the secondary stage, making free public education available to all citizens, whether as until recently in schools run by the Ministry of Education ('public schools') or as from 2010 by the Supreme Council's Institute of Education ('independent schools'). In addition to state run schools, there is an increasing number of privately managed schools such as International Schools providing an education following curricula of the 'parent' country, for example England or America. Schooling in Qatar can be divided into four stages:

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Length</b>
Kindergarten Stage (4-6)	2 years [since 2003/4]
Elementary Stage (age 6-12 years)	6 years
Intermediate Stage (age 12-15 years)	3 years
Secondary Stage (age 15-18 years)	3 years

**Figure 5.1:** Qatari school education stages

The Arabic-based curriculum serves all four educational stages and English is taught as a second language in all Qatari schools. In year two of the secondary stage, each student is required to choose between Arts and Science subjects. At the end of this stage all secondary school students are required to sit for the secondary school national examination. Since 2002 however, Arabic as the medium of instruction has been replaced by English in the teaching of mathematics, English and science in secondary schools. Interestingly, in 2011-12 an issue of students losing Arabic language fluency has been identified, prompting rethinking of the balance of language of teaching delivery. All students who obtain results of over 70% in their final exams are likely to be accepted on courses at the University of Qatar. Those who obtain 80% or more in their final exams are awarded scholarships to enable them to study abroad, if desired, in fields which are not offered at the University of Qatar. Those who are not eligible for entry to the university are able to attend the ‘Post Intermediate School Education’ programme offering vocational courses, which can then be extended into university courses in the same field.

In the academic year 2000/2001 the number of students within “private schools” – that is, schools run by private individuals or agencies such as businesses or foreign embassies - had reached 53,971 (34% of the total number of students in public schools). This sector has seen greater expansion in all educational stages, extending to a growing number of national and foreign higher education institutes including a number of American and British universities.

The educational reforms in Qatar directed by The Supreme Education Council and established by Emiri Decree No. 37 in November 2002 set up three key Bodies which are directly responsible for the reforms’ success.

1. **The Education Institute:** this oversees and supports public education in Qatar, delivered by the independent schools;
2. **The Evaluation Institute:** this develops and conducts testing of students, monitors student learning and evaluates school performance;
3. **The Higher Education Institute:** this advises individuals about career options and opportunities for higher education in Qatar and abroad, and administers scholarships and grants.

## **Education Institute**

The Education Institute has overall responsibility for curriculum and standards, finance, independent schools and, the professional development of both teachers and school leaders. The Education Institute comprises four offices:

1. Office of Professional Development
2. Office of Independent Schools
3. Office of Curriculum Standards
4. Office of Finance

The successful management of a school is dependent on well trained leadership and solid educational standards in addition to sound financial management. This is developed through the professional standards for school leaders set out in the National Report ‘The Development of Education’ which aims to achieve the following objectives:

*Leading education and learning in the school community and its administration;*

*Designing the school strategic vision, its message, and objectives and deliver them to the public;*

*Implementing the school strategic vision and objectives, follow it, revise and write reports about it;*

*Effecting leadership changes;*

*Effecting leadership for individuals, groups, and developing their skills;*

*Developing relations between the school and the community;*

*Preparing and managing resources;*

*Managing leadership and administration, improving and assessing performance*

(QMoE, 2008:81).

## **Independent schools**

The Education Institute is responsible for overseeing and providing support services to independent schools in three essential areas:

- i developing curriculum standards in key subject areas to facilitate a high level of learning;

- ii. providing professional development opportunities so that teachers and principals can stay up to date with current teaching and management techniques;
- iii. ensuring that the schools are fiscally accountable by monitoring their financial management through periodic reports and audits.

In 2002 the Qatari government started the reform process whereby all public schools were becoming:

*autonomous, government-funded independent schools, offering new models for rigorous curriculum design, teaching methods, and collaboration among parents, teachers and students. Four fundamental pillars support every aspect of this initiative: autonomy of schools; accountability, variety and choice*

(QSEC, 2007:4).

Independent schools are government-funded schools which have been granted autonomy to carry out their educational mission and objectives while being held accountable to terms agreed to in their operating contract with the Education Institute. All independent schools must meet established curriculum standards in Arabic, English, mathematics and science, as well as comply with periodic financial audits. While the Ministry of Education co-existed with the Supreme Education Council, independent schools were not subject to Ministry of Education direction or legislation, and significantly they are not, either during the transition period or since full implementation in 2010, subject to the School Library Act 1992.

In 2002 the number of public schools in Qatar stood at 209 (Doha International Bureau - website, 2005). The first group of new independent schools began operation at the start of the 2004-2005 academic year. Twelve schools opened in September 2004 and twenty-one more opened in September 2005. By the academic year 2010/11 all schools had migrated to independent status. As part of this process some Ministry schools closed and several new schools were built, so that by 2012 there are 184 independent state schools - plus a number of privately run institutions. Additionally, for the first time in Qatar's education history, a small number of state pre-schools (kindergartens) became part of the education system. Thus by 2012 the education landscape in Qatar has evolved to bring together independent and private schools as providers, able to determine their own educational philosophies and curriculum focus. A voucher system

is currently being introduced to cover tuition costs in independent schools (QSEC, n.d.: 32).

The private providers include international schools using for example American or English curricula and community schools set up by private organizations at a local level. The number of privately run schools has grown and so have waiting lists for them, because as Qatari people have begun to demand improved teaching and learning opportunities, there is concern that Qatar performance remains below international levels, despite national aspirations and targets and the new decentralized independent school structure. The Supreme Education Council, as part of their reforms under Law No.7, has extended their system of education vouchers to both private and independent schools (QSEC, 2012). Schools are required to register and meet two conditions, acceptance of which recognizes that schools have '*achieved a certain level of quality standards and that the school was able to demonstrate such a level of quality through a comprehensive and independent evaluation system*' (QSEC, 2012).

The Supreme Education Council has publicised its ideas, innovations and progress to date in annual review documents. These capture the rapid rate of progress that has been taking place in the new independent schools. The 2005 annual report 'Inspiring Achievement' (QSEC, 2005) reported the opening of twenty-one new independent schools in 2005; completion and launch of curriculum standards; the expansion of professional development opportunities; launch of a new teacher's network; boards of trustees established for independent schools; the establishment of higher education institutions and administration of a new scholarship programme; and the participation of Qatari students in international research studies.

The report discusses the change in school culture, commenting on the impact of smaller class size, students having a voice through class officers, student leadership councils and student representation and noting that '*when teaching and learning change for the better, students' behaviour changes as well*' with improved relationships and respect between students and teachers (SEC, 2005:12). Although concern was voiced by some parents about the rapid changes in the teaching of English in one elementary school for girls, at the end of that year the parents credited staff for their children's newfound

capabilities in English, reporting ‘*We noticed the change ...the students are thinking, they're searching for information. This is a good start*’ (QSEC 2005:14).

The 2006 review *Illuminating Learning* reported that 2006 had been a year of change, with the growth in independent schools being matched – and possibly exceeded – by innovation and technological changes in education (QSEC 2006:3).

The 2007 annual report *5 Years' Achievement* (QSEC, 2007), reviewed the progress made during 2002-2007. It acknowledges the rapid change, stating,

*'Like any visionary idea, implementation of reform has not been without challenges. We demand much from our students and teachers, and our independent schools must continuously evolve to support the hard work that goes on in the classroom. We set a very high benchmark for measurable outcomes, even though most experts say that the benefits of true reform take at least a generation to emerge'... 'Whatever challenges we have faced, however, we have always kept in mind that they are learning opportunities ... and our response to reform offers an important model for our children'; 'After 5 years of educational reform: there are 73 independent schools enrolling 41,182 students from more than 40 different countries; they are guided by 2,673 teachers and administrators, and 85 social workers; 38% of teachers are Qatari; 262 students have earned bachelor's degrees and 51 students have earned master's degrees'* (QSEC 2007:5).

The report stated that professional teaching standards for K-12 (covering all school stages) teachers and administrators had been implemented by the Education Institute, benchmarking the skills and knowledge necessary for teachers to excel and ensure that they have deep understanding of the subjects that they teach (QSEC 2007: 11). The Qatar Senior School Certificate (QSSC), which provides an overview of each student’s academic performance across all subjects, was now awarded to all students on completion of their secondary education. The 2006 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, participated in by 14,500 Qatari students, showed that Qatar’s fourth-grade students performed better than their peers in countries such as Kuwait, Morocco and South Africa, and had improved when compared with public school students’ achievement. Of interest was that again girls outperformed boys in all schools – a pattern also evident in the international trend. The Evaluation Institute issued report cards to all schools on their performance for the second consecutive year. This

information is aimed at helping parents select the best schools for their children and holding schools accountable for their performance' (QSEC, 2007:15).

In 2007 the Supreme Education Council had partnered with The Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology (ictQATAR) to create a technology-based framework to enhance e-learning. A pilot project with twelve schools participated in KnowledgeNet, using Microsoft Learning Gateway and Blackboard. Tablet PCs (portable computers) were trialled in one school with 200 seventh grade students as part of the 'e-schoolbag project'. By 2012 this e-schoolbag initiative began to be rolled out nationally, with the intention that with this freedom to foster learning in young people through digital resources and technology, schools will encourage students to become independent learners and to make use of resources beyond the classroom.

However, a recent article in the Doha News interviewing former teacher Noor Al-Dirhem, now working for the Supreme Education Council (Ahmed, 2013) reported that there were fundamental problems in the quality of teaching and students' learning in the independent schools in Qatar that has resulted in teachers leaving the profession. Principals have been forced to address the shortage of teachers by appointing staff that were poorly qualified with poor student and classroom management skills. The article reported that 50% of students have home tutor support and that although they were able to pass exams there was little evidence of real learning. The article suggests that this could signal problems with the recent reform of schools and its plan to increase competition between independent and private schools as a means of driving up the quality of learning and teaching.

Whatever the motivation behind the extension of the education voucher scheme, if schools are likely to be competing for parental choice, there is the potential for effective and attractive school libraries to be part of the range of service offered by principals to parents, influencing parental decisions. If 'real learning' is one of the key problems identified here by Al-Dirhem, there is a strong role for school librarians in helping students and teaching colleagues develop critical thinking skills that are important for independent learning. However, the difficulties principals face in recruiting properly qualified and experienced teaching staff may well apply also for librarians, who also need to understand modern teaching and learning methods and student management.

## **Qatar Foundation**

Amongst the innovations that have taken place during this period is the Education City, a 2,500 acre education campus created in Doha in October 2003 within the responsibility of the Qatar Foundation. The latter was founded by His Highness the Emir in 1995 as a non-profit organization tasked with seeing through the cultural and educational vision and management of the government. The Qatar Foundation's mission is to

*'prepare the people of Qatar and the region to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world and to make Qatar a leader in innovative education and research'.*

and it aims to lead

*'Qatar's drive to become an advanced knowledge-based society. It is transforming Qatari society by educating the rising generation to the highest world standards - these will be the skilled professionals who will be the country's future leaders – and turning Qatar into a producer of knowledge by building a research base. It is intended that some of the new ideas will reach the stage of commercialization, helping diversify the economy'*

(Qatar Foundation website)

Supported by extensive residential and recreational facilities, the newly created Education City in Doha is seen as a community of institutions that serve the whole citizen, from early childhood education to post-graduate study. It is planned as a major educational community of institutions in the Middle East aimed at developing scientific institutions of the highest standard, as well as expanding their benefits to Qatari society. Education City campus contains schools, research institutes and a number of higher education campuses run by international university partners, federated under the umbrella name of Hamad Bin Khalifi University, including:

Carnegie Mellon University (Business Administration and Computer Science)

Georgetown University (International and Regional Studies)

HEC Paris (Energy and Financial Management)

North Western University (Media and Journalism)

Rand Qatar Policy Institute (Strategic Development)

Texas A&M University (Engineering)

- University College London (Museum and Conservation Practice; Arab and Islamic Archaeology; Information Studies)
- Virginia Commonwealth University (Design Arts)
- Weill Cornell University (Medical Education)

The intention is that Education City is seen as a hub for the creation of new knowledge encompassing education from schools to higher education. Central to this is the Qatar National Library (QNL) which was launched on November 19<sup>th</sup> 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser who stated,

We are pleased to embrace the promise of a new, world class Qatar National Library. The library's vision of bridging with knowledge Qatar's heritage and future demonstrates the significant role QNL will play in unlocking human potential as Qatar builds a knowledge-based economy. A modern dynamic National Library for the country is essential in reaching this goal (QF, 2012).

The QNL is seen as a national resource, which will preserve the rich archival heritage of Qatar and the cultural legacy of the Arab World gathered over the past centuries, embracing the country's tradition and heritage, but also creating a bridge the QNL will provide a bridge to the nation's future as a knowledge economy, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

It was reported that

*as a founding partner of the World Digital Library, QNL will provide innovative facilities for exploring interaction between devices and human beings to promote new ways of learning. QNL will operate a Qatar Reference Service and provide access to over 60 online databases and websites and will have over 300 public computers, wi-fi and multi-media production studios. QNL will partner with British Library to digitize 500.000 records relating to Qatar. An 'eHub' will make millions of electronic books and documents accessible at the touch of a fingertip, and it will not even be necessary to visit the library in person, as the archive will be accessible remotely through a mobile phone or other handheld device (QF 2012).*

Dr. Claudia Lux, QNL Project Director stated the importance of this project which had unique scope and breadth able to bridge the gap between past and future and enable a true modern renaissance of Arab culture, education and scientific discovery, observing:

*The Qatar National Library of tomorrow will be created to be a place between home and work, where all Qataris can meet friends, enjoy moments with their families and spend leisure and creative time in their personal journey in search*

*of knowledge and cultural experiences. However, this journey will begin soon as a strong digital library and a virtual reference desk are key services the Qatar National Library will provide before the new building officially opens.*

*In addition to providing access to the significant digital heritage collection about Qatar, QNL will also introduce the Gulf and Arab Science online portal, which is being developed in co-operation with prestigious international partners. The platform will be launched using digitized material from the British Library's Indian Office Archive, as well as its famous oriental manuscripts. Once complete, the portal will become a key cultural asset of Qatar, open to researchers from around the world, students of all classes, and Qatari families researching their own rich cultural histories' (QF 2012).*

As illustrated above, the government has mobilized considerable financial resources in implementing new changes and thus the educational institutions are becoming more experienced in the recruitment of highly-qualified individuals to manage and teach in education.

Her Highness Sheikha Moza Bint Nassar Al-Misnid expects that all Qatari schools will make use of the Qatar National Library e-Hub resource within curriculum teaching and identified the need for teachers to be trained in how to make best use of the digital material in student learning.

#### **5.4 Implications for school libraries in the current education system**

It is recognized in the Supreme Education Council's annual reports that teachers need to have an in-depth knowledge of their particular subject field, and arguably part of the school librarian's role is to contribute the deep understanding of information skills in partnership with teaching colleagues which will help to open up this subject knowledge by students. If this is so, this in turn raises implications for the nature of qualification and ongoing professional development of school librarians. Michael Romanowski, professor of education and educational leadership at the University of Qatar, reported in the Financial Times (Doha rolls out private school vouchers, 2012) that a current barrier to improving education in the independent system remains a lack of qualified teachers, a point also made by Al-Dirhem, above. If school libraries are to have a role in contributing towards educational improvement, what is true for teachers may also be true for qualified librarians.

It is noted in the reports that there has been an expansion of professional development opportunities and provision of a support network for school principals and for teachers. The new system places a high responsibility on principals and boards of trustees which would seem to have implications for how these key management people are supported in understanding what a school library and properly qualified school librarian can offer to individual school success and the overall national educational aspirations.

There is potential here to look at how a similar training, service delivery support and career development network could be established for school librarians, particularly as the central support role previously offered by the Ministry of Education' School Libraries Department has now entirely gone with the completion of the migration of public schools into the independent system. This is of particular importance because the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Qatar closed in 2010 and there has latterly been no mechanism for the training of qualified library professionals inside Qatar. As at 2012 there are the beginnings of discussion with University College London on provision of an appropriate accredited qualification programme to be delivered with the UCL Doha campus to complement the Qatar Foundation / British Library national library project; because the national library project includes an important role for schools to engage students in the digital resources offered, there is great scope to include training and development of school librarians as part of this qualification initiative.

It is important to note, nevertheless, that no mention is made in the annual reports of school libraries, the way in which school libraries might be used to develop literacy, reading or to raise students' achievement, or the way in which trained librarians could contribute to the curriculum and support students' information literacy. Yet the message throughout emphasizes the high priority the Government places on the development of Qatar as a literate, advanced knowledge-based society where students have well-developed research and critical thinking skills. It is clear that Qatar is investing substantially in recreating itself as leader in education and underpinning the professionalism of teaching within its schools.

There is an informal advisory document, the *Good Practice Guide*, which was issued to librarians in those schools which were independent in 2009 by the Supreme Education Council. This Guide provides an important framework for school librarians to enable them to take a more positive role within school. It defines the nature and role of a learning resource centre and how this contributes to Qatar's education reform agenda. It offers advice on the creation of an effective library, on collection, library management systems, staffing and information literacy and it supplies an audit tool aimed at helping librarians to evaluate their practice. The guidance grounds the library activity within the context of internationally respected understanding of school library contribution, based on the findings of American school library impact studies (see figure 5.2 below).

This guide is the closest thing available to the independent schools in relation to the now superseded School Libraries Act 2002, but unlike the Act it has no statutory weight. However, this document was not directed at school principals and senior managers, and is not noted within the Supreme Education Council's official reports, and it is somewhat unclear, as at 2012, how far its use is being encouraged at national level across all independent schools. The SEC guidance uses the work of internationally recognized information literacy and school library specialist, Ross Todd, to set out the contribution of effective school libraries as a series of goals for Qatari independent schools. These goals are shown in the table below.

Information creates meaning and understanding, enables learners to make sense of their situations; meaning varies from person to person
Learner is actively involved in information transfer and does something with the information to satisfy learning needs
Information is understood and utilized according to the learner's existing knowledge and situation
The learner is an active information processor and decision-maker
Information seeking behaviors of learners vary from individual to individual
The need for learners to have access to information appropriate to their abilities, interests and needs
Education for information literacy is valued
Library is vital link between learners and resources which they need to develop their potential
Satisfying learner's needs are important; feedback is essential
Collaborative approaches between teacher and school librarian to develop information literacy

**Figure 5.2:** 21st Century View of School Libraries (Todd, 1992 in QSEC 2009:21)

The various annual reports note the development of new curriculum standards and high benchmarks for measurable outcomes as important parts in ensuring strong schools. This falls within the remit of the Office of Curriculum Standards within the Institute of Education. It raises the question of what standards are expected of the services and contribution school libraries make and how these fit into the wider school evaluation, and whether this contribution is something parents are aware of and should want to consider when making choices about the best school for their children. It also raises the issue of whether standards and review of school libraries are seen as an integral part of the curriculum and education standards or to be covered separately. There are also implications here for librarians' understanding of how to demonstrate the library impact within school priorities and curriculum delivery.

The Supreme Education Council's Research Awareness Campaign report highlighting the value of developing the research skills of students noted,

*We need to do the best job we can of teaching the research skills that are embedded in the Curriculum Standards. This means that in Science, we must teach scientific enquiry at all grades, not just science content and facts. In mathematics, it means teaching reasoning, problem solving, and data handling, not just how to compute. In English, it means teaching critical reading and writing, not just the recall of factual information. In ICT, it means teaching how to locate, evaluate, organize, and use electronic information, not just cutting and pasting for reports' (QSEC, 2008:18).*

It is interesting to see that although it is implicit that information literacy and library skills underpin the ability to carry out the above, no mention is made of the term 'library' or 'learning resource centre'. This was confirmed by one of the secondary principals of an independent boys' school when interviewed for this study: asked as to whether there was a requirement for library provision in the contract that he signed in setting up an independent school, he replied that the word '*library*' was not mentioned, and there was no reference to '*library standards*' (Interview with Principal, DIS).

Additionally, it is interesting to note (as at April 2013) that the term library/ media resource centre - or any other term which could be used to describe the function of the school library - does not appear on the website of the Supreme Education Council, other than in a labelled 'resources for teachers' news article 11 May 2004, which allows the viewer to access a portal to the American Library Association (ALA) and the American Association of School Libraries (AASL).

The Supreme Education Council's challenge of '*teaching ... research skills that are embedded in the curriculum*' is not a problem faced by Qatar alone. There has been considerable debate and experimentation in the United Kingdom on how best to achieve this and it is apparent that students need to learn and practise research skills and critical thinking within a range of subject contexts for the best learning to happen. In Scotland a *Scottish Information Literacy Curriculum* has been in development for some years and has informed the more recent development of the

*Information Literacy Curriculum (Wales).* The English school curriculum sets out expectations for ‘personal learning and thinking skills’ and research skills within subject areas (QCA, no date) but it is not immediately obvious how to tie this effectively into continuing student development of these skills across the taught curriculum. Work is ongoing at present within the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (the UK professional body) and the School Library Association on detailed mapping of all such skills across the whole curriculum and modelling of shared teaching and librarian delivery and assessment of these skills. The rationale and models for this are discussed further in Chapter 6, in addressing the third research question on what are the critical factors contributing to successful school libraries, and the implications for Qatari schools considered there.

The fact that school libraries are generally not mentioned in conjunction with education policy agendas is not an issue exclusive to Qatar. Reading of UK government education agenda documents shows that this invisibility of school library potential is true in other countries. In the United Kingdom, organizations such as CILIP, the national body for library and information professionals, and the School Library Association have taken up the task of scrutinising all such policy statements to map out how and where libraries can positively contribute to the policies, and to comment back to government on the role and value of school librarians in educational aims. This raises issues for how any similar mapping and commenting could be done in Qatar. One possibility would be to have an official ‘champion for school libraries’ whose role involved scanning draft policy and reports and identifying areas of contribution. Another possibility would be for the Education Standards Department to require schools to show how their library is integrated into educational aims.

There is a contradiction here between developments by the Supreme Education Council highlighted above and the legislation of the 1992 School Library Act and the Ten Year Plan for the Development of School libraries (1995) which assign specific powers to the school libraries in the country, and the comments by the independent school policy makers interviewed as part of the research undertaken.

The interviews with the policy makers, discussed below, reveal their aspirations for developing school library provision during this critical transition period. In 2005 a number of officials within the Ministry of Education policy making group concerned with the public school system were interviewed. This group, consisting of the Minister of Education (ME), the Under Secretary (US), Assistant Under Secretary for Cultural Affairs (ACA), the Head of the Department for National Curriculum (HDNC) and the Director of the Department for School Libraries (DDSL) identified the following elements as key future considerations:

- The need to transform school libraries into resource centers with a greater utilization of digital services and a connection with developments in ICT and school library websites which would enable students to have greater access to the library services;
- As an important tool of education, school libraries should be supported to develop and have more links with higher educational institutions. Primarily this would be with the University of Qatar, although potentially this could include the international campus institutions;
- School library networks should be established that would allow greater communication among the Qatari school libraries and with other school libraries worldwide;
- School libraries need to be transformed into self-learning resource centres, making a greater effort to employ qualified librarians from other countries especially in the boys' secondary schools (as a response to the difficulties in recruiting male Qatari librarians), and encouraging more networking between the school librarians and the Department of School Libraries through the suggested school library network;
- The school library should become one of the major sources of learning; it should also be considered as an important tool of learning. The implication here is that the school library needs to be a heading within each school's development plan, so that it can be monitored systematically.

The policy makers showed understanding of the role of school libraries in modern education. However, they recognized that Qatari students and teachers alike need to

understand how they could benefit from the school library. This was captured by the Minister of Education who stated,

*'The School Library could play an educating role to the whole community, but this would need more advocacy and the media to explain the importance of the school library to the community'*

(ME, 2005)

The Under Secretary was concerned that,

*'The community is not aware about the importance of the school library. If this is changed, the school library will be able to play an important educational and awareness raising role'*

(US, 2005)

There was a consensus that school libraries would benefit from wider community understanding of the potential and role of what libraries offered, and one policy maker suggested that 'school libraries can extend their opening hours to allow the community to use their services' (ACA, 2005), as a way of drawing in the community, although he offered no specific details of who would be responsible, the practicalities of managing this or how this dual-use might be funded.

The Director of the Institute of Education of the Supreme Education Council, supervising the independent schools, was clear about her vision of the school library, stating,

*'The purpose and mission of the school library in independent schools is very important as it is an integral part of productive creative and resourceful learners. Our plan for the coming five years is to ensure that there is a librarian and an assistant librarian in each independent school library. Therefore, the expected total number for 200 schools will be to place 400 librarians and assistant librarians'*

(DIOE, 2007)

She confirmed that it was very important to allocate a space within schools for a library resources centre. However, she observed that in accordance with the new educational system, the decision should be left to the school administration, parents and board of governors to decide the specifications and details of that school library. It is clear from this, if the decision is to be taken at a local level, that clear guidance is necessary for schools in terms of the roles and responsibility of the

librarian, the extended role of the library and its contribution to the curriculum and students' literacy together with a clear mission statement for the school library, and that this needs to be communicated to parents as part of informing their choice of school.

All interviewees agreed that, during the last ten years, school libraries have witnessed major developments in terms of staffing, facilities and buildings. They agreed that IT in school libraries was a necessity for any modern school library. They believe that school libraries should serve as modern resource centres and as such all Qatari schools should be encouraged to introduce IT to their list of services offered within the library. They have also agreed that Qatari school libraries should be equipped with the latest facilities in order to allow students and teaching staff to receive, access and exploit information by using information technology, to be part of a fully integrated print and online resource service. All respondents agreed that there has been a general move to introduce IT in school libraries in Qatar. There are also ambitious plans to integrate IT into the curriculum and learning process.

Her Highness Sheikha Moza has taken this further in the last couple of years, supporting the introduction of a personal digital library and education record for all students. The intention is to provide each student with a personal tablet computer through which digital resources can be accessed. Also each student will have a record of their education progress which will also be available to their teachers and their parents. This is an exciting push to make sure that all school students are equipped to use digital material and exploit technology. There are some challenges here; the digital library is a centrally led resource but it is to be used within schools where the view of the Supreme Education Council is that individual principals remain responsible for how the curriculum and resources are to be used in the school's teaching strategy.

It is not clear whether having access to the digital library for each student would be seen by principals as a replacement for any more physical library provision, despite the Director of the Institute of Education's vision of a librarian and assistant librarian in every school. There is no statement of how this personal digital resource integrates into a wider view of library services as a combined approach to

developing students' abilities in all areas of literacies and with all media. However, there is a clear potential role here – if students are to be equipped to get the best out of digital material – for school librarians as developers of information literacy and digital information understanding. Arguably school librarians should be ideally placed to help with the skills needed by teachers and by students in making the best use of information, whether in traditional formats or in digital media, so this raises questions about where school librarians fit into the proposed training programme linked to the Qatar Foundation initiative.

This chapter set out to examine how the development of education policy within Qatar has influenced the role and activity of school libraries within the last thirty years. The education system in Qatar has dictated the role of libraries and the way in which they have been seen as contributing to learning. Raphael writes,

*In the past, the library or Muktabah evoked an image where books were displayed and where scholars came to borrow texts. Today, however, the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) or Markez Massader Al-Ta’alom plays a much more dynamic role in schools and is a place stocked with a wide range of print and non-print resources accessed by teachers and students alike for a multitude of purposes. LRCs contribute to the development of students' educational success and are places for research, collaboration, reading and debate'* (QSEC 2009:4).

It is not only the resources and space that have evolved, but the accessibility of libraries. Libraries are no longer only accessible to elite scholars, but are intended to be part of every school with the potential to contribute to the learning of students and teachers. School library provision has evolved since 1963 in terms of number of public school libraries and resources available, with a big growth during the period 1990-2001 supported by a specialist team who had responsibility ranging from recruitment of staff, the collection, budget, through to inspection and professional development. The curriculum reforms brought in by the Qatari Education Act 2003, resulting in the setting up of the independent schools and the reduction of the public schools and a stated prioritizing of the information and reading literacy skills of the nation, have however also seen a reduction in library support provision and the loss of the academic training provided by the University of Qatar.

What this highlights is that in the middle of the extensive curriculum reforms that have taken place in Qatar since 2002, detailed consideration of the role of the library in schools and the management implications of this still needs considerable strategic attention. The implications for university trained library specialists within Qatar are now at risk; there is no single coherent policy on the role of independent school libraries in developing students with information literacy skills which can be transferred to supporting learning and research at university. Instead the students' experience is totally dependent on the experience, view and philosophy of the individual school in which they were educated.

## 5.5 Conclusions from Chapter 5

This chapter set out to examine how the development of education policy within Qatar has influenced the role and activity of school libraries within the last thirty years. The education system in Qatar has dictated the role of libraries and the way in which they have been seen as contributing to learning. Raphael writes,

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also seen a reduction in library support provision and the loss of the academic training provided by the University of Qatar.

**The process of addressing the second research question has therefore revealed seven key points:**

- The present pace of change is very rapid and reflects important aspirations for improvement in literacy and independent learners within school and more widely within the educational, social and cultural future of the country and in contributing to labour market needs, in which school libraries could play a useful part;
- There is awareness of this potential, particularly in the vision of Her Highness, but as yet there is little mechanism for demonstrating this in education policy and strategy. There is therefore a need for a commitment at strategic level to include school libraries in education policy development;
- There is a need for a clear vision of the role and value of school libraries, backed by a clear set of school library standards, against which principals are accountable to the Supreme Education Council and school librarians are accountable to principals;
- There is a need for mapping of school library contribution against curriculum and agendas at national and individual school levels. Who would do this needs to be established;
- There is a need for school library advocacy which can communicate the vision, value and contribution to the public generally, to parents, to school students and to teachers. Who would do this needs to be established;
- The Qatar National Vision promotes efficient, transparent and accountable infrastructure in which educational institutions should operate under centrally-determined guidelines, but the School Libraries Act 1992 no longer has any application and the Supreme Education Council guidelines of 2009 were an informal document directed only to school librarians. There is therefore an urgent need for new legislation and comprehensive and practical guidelines

written for school management and backed up by training. Who would do this needs to be established;

- Conferences and training provide support and motivation for school librarians but there needs to be realistic development of recommendations made, and consideration should be given to how librarians should engage in education conferences rather than exclusively library events as part of building collaboration with teaching colleagues and education policy makers.

## **Chapter 6: HOW QATARI SCHOOL LIBRARIES COMPARE WITH IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICE**

**This chapter addresses the question “What are the critical factors contributing to successful school libraries which may be identified from the experience of other countries, and how do the experiences of Qatari school libraries compare with these?**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Central to answering this research question is being able to justify why school libraries matter. The literature review has identified that the purpose of a school library is to support the educational, social and cultural development of students, and that in providing an effective school library, a school is contributing to the rights of the child and their access to information (Article 19) and education (Article 26) as defined by the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (1948) and UNESCO (1999). The literature examined points to the key role that school libraries play in supporting both students' learning and the curriculum. In 2004 the Secretary of State for Education in the United Kingdom captured both their contribution and their impact, noting

*The school library is the heart of the school, which itself has learning at its core and good libraries can empower the learner. The resources in a library can allow our imaginations to run free, introduce us to new experiences and promote access to knowledge and enjoyment (DfES 2004c:1).*

This is a powerful statement which contains within it the freedom and autonomy of students to choose what to learn when they want to, allowing them to follow their personal interests at their own level, outside of what is taught by the teacher in the classroom. It is apparent from the literature review that successful school libraries are those which are firmly established as an integral part of the teaching and learning of a school, clearly set within the school's improvement and development plans and priorities.

An extensive body of research including from the UK and USA has identified that school libraries and librarians can make an important contribution to students' learning and achievement specifically within the core areas of: information literacy; reading (literacy) support; the development of the child's 'reader identity'; social and cultural

awareness in addition to playing a role in the school's wider role involvement with parents and the local community. The resources held by the library and available to learners and the information literacy skills taught to the students by the librarian enable them to have the autonomy to access, research and learn at their own pace and prepare the student for learning and using information beyond school, in a global society. The library also plays a central role in supporting the learning culture of the school, creating learning communities, supporting education and self-improvement, "acting as motors for dynamic and effective learning, whether for individuals or for groups" (DfES, 2000:2).

The key role played by qualified librarians who are able to take an active role promoting the learning opportunities and potential provided by the school library, who are able to work collaboratively with colleagues to support the school ethos and learning has been highlighted within the literature in a range of sources, for example Ofsted (2006), Ontario Library Association (2006) and the third Colorado study of the impact of school libraries and librarians on academic achievement (Francis *et al*, 2010).

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) sees the school librarian as a mentor who has the professional expertise to guide students through a complex range of resources and whose aim is to develop skills and learning:

*A skilled library practitioner with responsibility and time to help children and young people develop the skills needed to manage today's information overload, to become lifelong learners and to meet the future job market's need for problem solvers and independent thinkers* (CILIP 2011:1).

The third research question examines the good-practice implications of these aspirations and relates these to the current Qatari picture. It is composed of two strands:

**i. 'What are the critical factors contributing to successful school libraries which may be identified from the experience of other countries?'** A range of perspectives will be used to discuss this part of the question drawing on the literature review for comparative philosophies, international and national guidelines, policy and standards that provide frameworks for good practice in the setting up of school libraries and combining this with examples drawn from practical frameworks, the insights of school librarians recognized for their effectiveness and with the author's observations of school

libraries and related services. In particular, the UK toolkit *Improve Your Library* (DfES 2004), designed to support self-evaluation of school libraries within the context of school goals, provides a useful structure and bank of examples to help understand library effectiveness, contribution to student development and to the wider teacher and community needs.

**ii. ‘How do the experiences of Qatari libraries compare with these?’** This part of the question is addressed through an examination of findings of the research carried out in Qatar, comprising surveys, interviews and observational visits.

The two strands will be examined in conjunction throughout the chapter, following a progression from consideration of the concept and role of school libraries, their contribution into the education and cultural areas of the development of children, young people and their families to consideration of the implications of these issues for the practical skills and responsibilities of librarians in managing and delivering these purposes.

## **6.2 School libraries for the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

The literature has identified that the successful school library engages with the concept of intellectual freedom and access to and ethical use of information. These aspects are reinforced as essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in democracy, a point emphasized by IFLA (UNESCO/IFLA 2000).

The right of access to services and collections should be based on the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights and Freedoms (1948), and should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, or to commercial pressures. In the United Kingdom, a range of legislation seeks to safeguard this right as a basic human entitlement, including the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 requiring local authorities to provide a public library service and free access to a range of print-based resources, and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which entitles individuals to request and obtain information held or controlled by public institutions. This is backed up by the CILIP code of professional ethics.

The IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom stated that it is

*'the fundamental right of human beings both to access and to express information without restriction.'*

*'IFLA and its worldwide membership support, defend and promote intellectual freedom as expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This intellectual freedom encompasses the wealth of human knowledge, opinion, creative thought and intellectual activity'* (IFLA/FAIFE, 2002a).

IFLA affirms that libraries should not be limited by medium or boundaries in their role of providing access to ideas and information. Libraries should be “gateways to knowledge, thought and culture, offering essential support for independent decision-making, cultural development, research and lifelong learning by both individuals and groups” (IFLA/FAIFE, 2002a). To be able to do this it is essential that libraries and librarians do not discriminate against potential users for “any reason including race, national or ethnic origin, gender or sexual preference, age, disability, religion, or political beliefs” (IFLA/FAIFE, 2002a).

If we take this principle into considering school library services, this will mean that the services should be provided equally to all members of the internal school community whether students, teaching or administrative staff. The question then arises as to whether access should be restricted only to this internal user group or extended to the wider school community that the school serves. For many schools who describe themselves as 'community schools' or 'extended schools', and who see themselves as a community resource, this concept is much wider, including parents and the local population within which the school is located. The American Library Association recognizes the place of school libraries as part of this 'learning community', both in terms of their contribution to it and the contribution of outside libraries such as public libraries and those of universities and museums, to them (ALA/AECT 1998:123, 127).

The Qatari documents *The School Libraries Act* (QMoE 1992c); the *Department of School Libraries: Guidelines* (QMoE 1992a) and the *Good Practice Guide* (QSEC 2009) all provide clear guidance for school libraries in Qatar. The Act required the provision of a library within all state-funded schools and acknowledged the fundamental

role of the school library and its collection in developing the knowledge and learning of both the internal school community and the wider school community that it serves (QMoE, 1992:7). It set out a range of specifications, including laying down a ratio of 150 students per full time librarian (QMoE, 1992:36); that the librarian should have up to date knowledge of the school's curriculum in order to be able to support students and teachers through the collection and library skills training they offer (QMoE, 1992:40); that librarians should be qualified, holding a Bachelor's Degree in Information and Library Science or equivalent or above (QMoE, 1992:36). The University of Qatar offered this specialist qualification between 1995 and 2010, training approximately 20 students each year. Since then there has been no formal training for librarians within Qatar although there are plans for a Masters degree to be delivered via the University of Hamad Bin Khalifa, the umbrella institution embracing international higher education providers in Doha Education City, from autumn 2013.

The Qatar Supreme Education Council guidance on good practice in learning resource centres (QSEC 2009) states the necessity of writing a policy that is based in the context of school library vision and goal statements and which relate directly to strategic planning. These aspects contribute directly to the establishment of learning resource centre policy which enables the learning resource centre to function effectively and professionally.

The guide states,

*LRC staff need to be aware of the procedures that need to be followed in the face of different concerns and circumstances. That is why a range of policies needs to be established both in terms of administrative and patron-related issues. Teachers and students in a school also need to be made aware of the policies that govern the running of the LRC to ensure smooth implementation of the policies (QSEC, 2009:15).*

### **6.3 Librarians' role in Reader Development**

Reading is a key skill supporting practical, emotional and information literacy, and underpinning wider confidence with mathematics and scientific skills (OECD 2002:32). This connects with the Qatari education policy aspiration identified in Chapter 5 above, to develop citizens capable of embracing science (QSEC, undated:13). The school

library itself provides the ideal environment and resources for reading, reading activities and learning. It is important therefore to explore this relationship prior to examining the school library's role in the development role of information literacy. The UK School Library Association guidelines on reader development in the secondary school are clear about the role of the library in developing readers, stating:

*'Reader Development' is about making a connection between the reader, opening up new reading horizons, and taking reading off the pages, out of the library and into the lives of readers. It is a new buzzword for an old idea - enthusing people about reading and opening opportunities to talk about what they read - and as such meets all kinds of policy agendas in schools (Armstrong 2004:6).*

Three major themes emerged from the literature:

- i. Reading is a skill that supports independent lifelong learning: The basic skill of reading enables students to read for pleasure or for content, accessing information, stories and experiences throughout their lives enabling them to be part of society and develop their understanding of the world (Tilke 2002; OECD 2002; MORI 2003; La Marca 2004; Levitov 2010).
- ii. The school library plays a key role in reader development: The school library and the school librarian play a key role in providing opportunities which support independent learning that not only follows the interests and needs of the student, but in developing reading, research and study skills that contribute to the development of active self-directed learners (Barrett and Douglas, 2004). School libraries are the one place in the school that is dedicated to literacy, the book and the written and spoken word, whether presented on paper, in digital e-book or app book or audio-visual formats, or through the internet. It is a key environment where librarians share their enthusiasm for reading with their community (Barrett and Douglas 2004; Armstrong 2004; Streatfield et al 2010; Lancaster 2012).
- iii. School librarians contribute significantly to the reading culture of the school: School librarians can actively contribute to the reading culture of the school through their work with teachers in supporting the curriculum and through a range of whole school events and activities which reinforce the skills and contribution of good school

librarians in supporting students' reading (Irving 1996; Barrett and Douglas 2004; Brown 2005; Ofsted 2006; Clark and Rumbold, 2006; Streatfield et al 2010:10). The *Good School Libraries* report (Ofsted 2006) notes the negative effect of poor library provision and reader development, reporting weakness in reader development and personal reading where school libraries had poor or poorly presented stock, where there were restrictions on books being taken home, where extended reading was not fostered and where the school library was under-used in supporting literacy. The report emphasizes that school librarians should be as fully involved as possible in literacy development.

Literacy is a key concern for Qatar as for all countries and evidenced in the interest in the OECD and PISA tables. The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development *Report for Change* (OECD, 2002) provides useful indicators, trends and evidence from across the world on the importance of reading on students' development. It looked at evidence from thirty one countries, finding that a 'love of reading is more important for academic success than a family's income or class' and that there is evidence that reading comics can be just as effective in increasing attainment as reading books.

The 2011-2012 education report by the Supreme Education Council in Qatar (QSEC undated) reports the outcomes arising from the focus in recent years on literacy which have included the combating of illiteracy amongst adults (now down to 4%) and the use of both national assessments (annual QCEA: Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment which examines five subjects including Arabic and English) and international assessments (PISA: Program for International Student Assessment which assesses reading at age 15, and PIRLS: Progress in International Reading Literacy Study assessed at the age of 10-11). These allow for the comparison of Qatari students with those of other countries. The concern of Qatar for improving reading is highlighted in the OECD executive summary of findings from the 2009 survey (OECD 2010) which shows that 72% of 15 year old boys have a below-proficiency reading level 2, and 54% of girls have a below-proficiency reading level of 2. The Supreme Education Council's commitment to reform is demonstrated by Qatar being recognized as the country with the largest improvement in the PISA results when comparing rankings from 2006 with

2009, having made the largest progress with increases of 60 points in reading proficiency (equivalent to 19.2%) (QSEC, undated: 36).

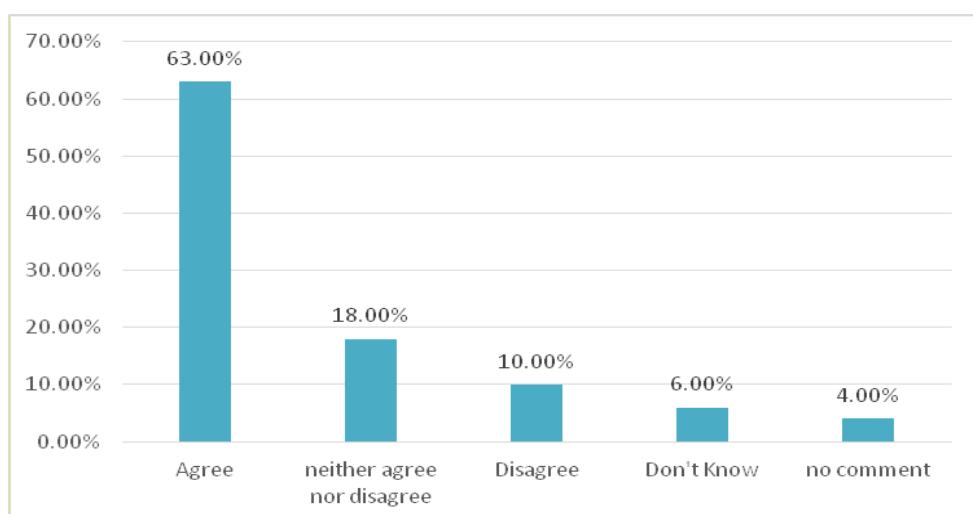
The Supreme Education Council reported:

*These improvements are significant and reveal that although the country appeared ranked among those with the lowest levels in 2006, it has the potential to reverse this situation in the following year* (QSEC, undated:32).

It also noted that,

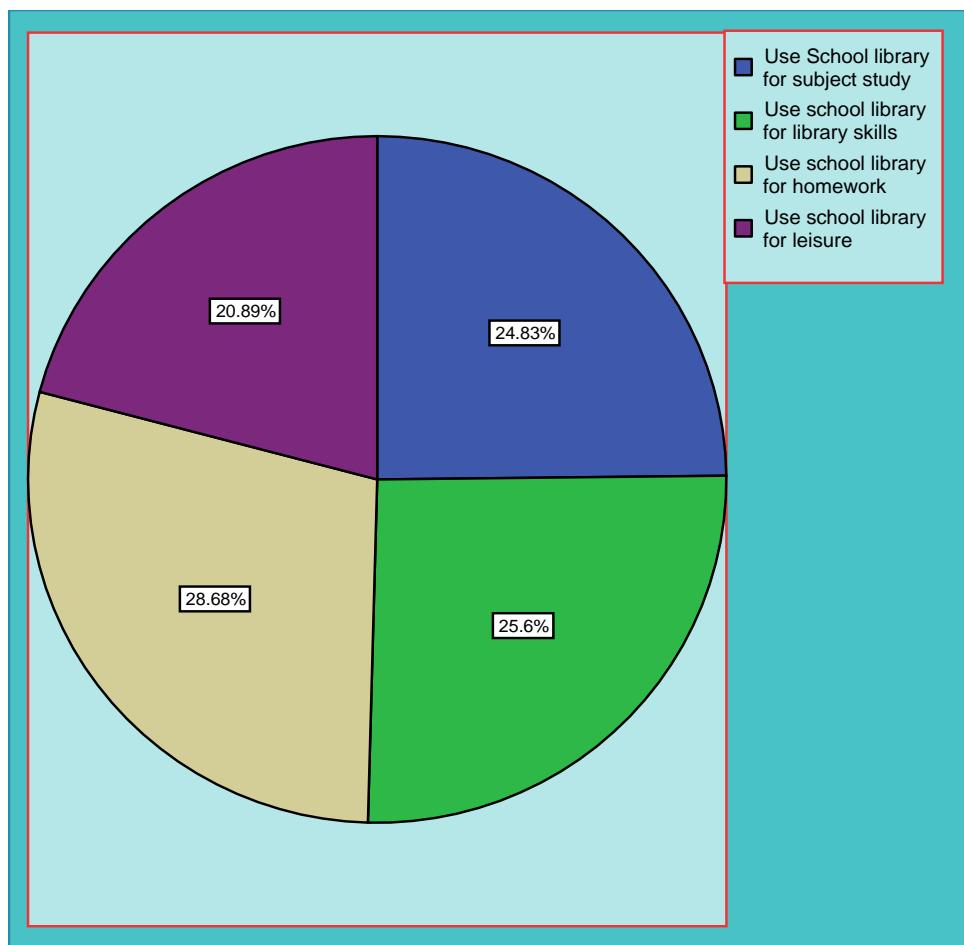
*Future developments cannot be made unless fundamental features are in place in all schools and for all students (basic literacy and numeracy skills, basic teacher skills) and is taking steps to ensure that this occurs* (QSEC, undated:35).

It is helpful here to see use of the school library as an indicator of attitude towards reading and to consider how it is currently part of these ‘fundamental features’. There is a real difference in Qatar between what was originally observed in the schools and evident in terms of students’ attitudes to the library and to reading in the early period of this research and the current interest in reading and literacy which is driven both national and locally. A useful starting point illustrated in Figure 6.1, is how the students actually viewed the school library, whether in positive or negative terms. The data indicates that the majority of students viewed it as a physically pleasant place to study.



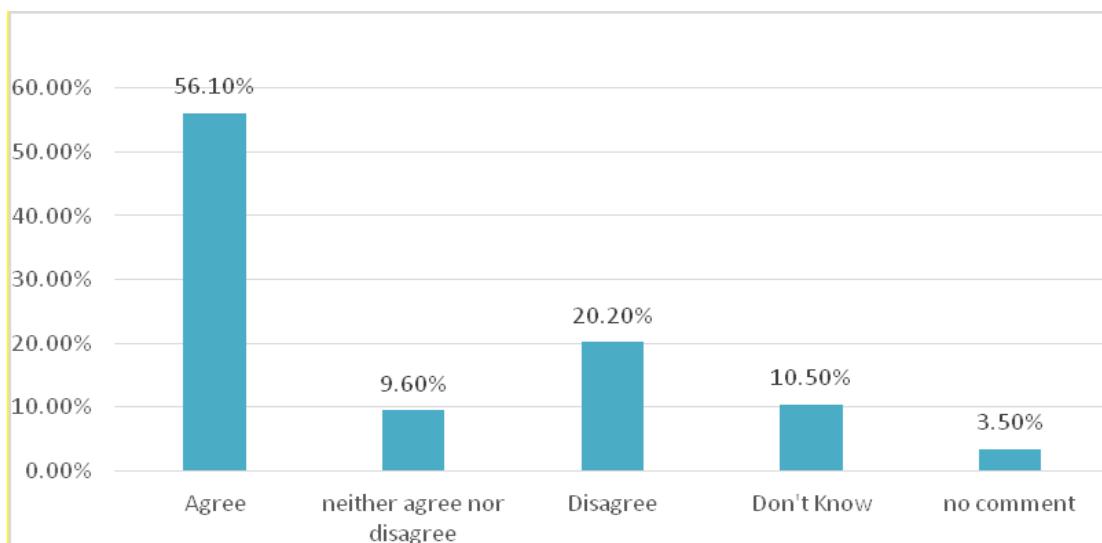
**Figure 6.1** Public school student perception of school library as place to study

Figure 6.2 below illustrates how the students use the school library for a range of different purposes. The pattern was fairly evenly divided between using the library to carry out homework, with slightly decreasing preference for using it to improve library skills (25.6%), for subject study use (24.83%) and for leisure purpose (20.9%).



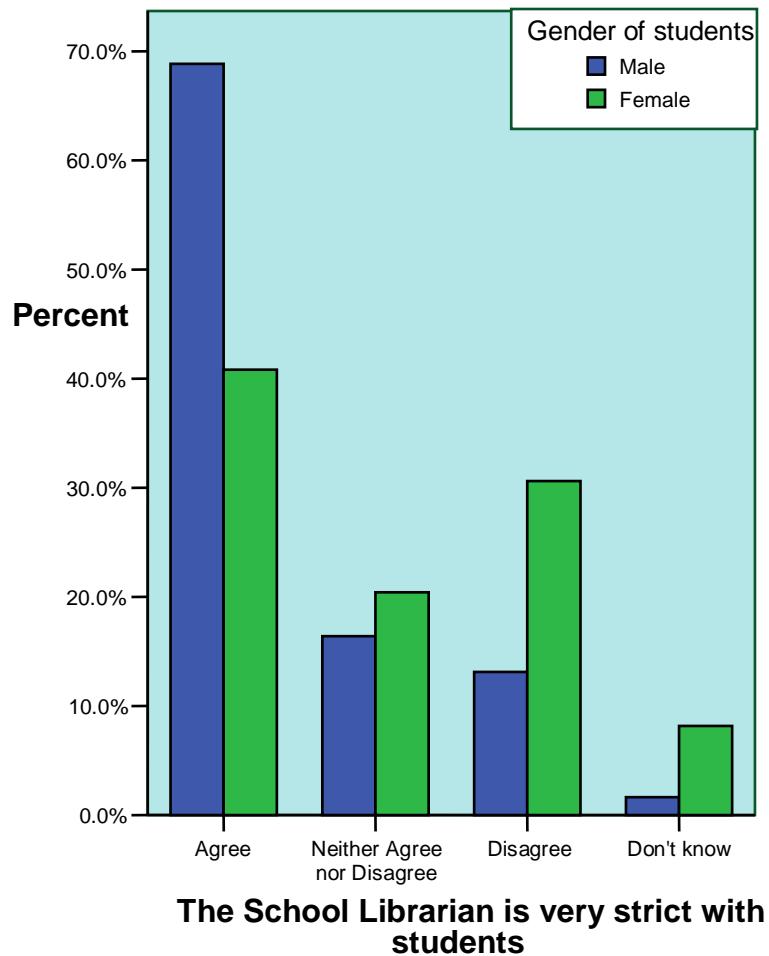
**Figure 6.2:** Student library use

In contrast, Figure 6.3 reveals that although the school library was seen as a physically pleasant place to study (as in Figure 6.1), and that although some students did choose to use it (as in Figure 6.2), it was seen by many as boring.



**Figure 6.3:** Student perception of school library as boring

This can be compared with the findings from research in the United Kingdom (Clark 2010, Define Research and Insight 2006) which suggested that the perceptions of young people about their library as an environment and about the relevance and appeal of the collections and activities were closely linked with the amount of use of the library and the enthusiasm for reading. Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.3 would seem to suggest that the library was not seen as a destination for leisure reading or activity. The perception of the school library as boring for 58% of the students needs to be examined since it could be related to a range of factors including access to the library outside of immediate class use in the school day; whether students felt that the library collection supported their interests and school work; whether library staff were seen as helpful or not or whether teachers recommended use of the library for subject research. An interesting point was that although the students reported that the job of the school librarian was to help them find ‘what they wanted’ (66.36%), almost 70% reported that the school librarian ‘is very strict with students’ (Figure 6.4). This raises concerns about how accessible and student-friendly librarians are, especially in situations where students were not confident library users and where 5.4% of students claimed that they did not know what the job of the school librarian was.



**Figure 6.4:** Student perception of the school librarian

The survey of public school students showed that students were largely unenthusiastic in their use of the library in terms of it supporting their reading and learning, a point supported by the school librarians who also observed that teachers in school did not encourage students to use the library to support research for their homework or studies. In contrast discussions with Independent school librarians during visits to school libraries, indicate more motivated students encouraged by subject teachers to use the library for research and study. It was noted also that a change in attitude towards literacy was supported by national reading projects and activities.

The author's discussions with public school librarians in the early stages of this research found that relatively little emphasis was put on developing activities to foster a reading culture in school, and that the amount of activity was to some extent linked with how qualified or experienced the school librarian was. This was despite schools receiving a

centrally allocated sum of funding towards promotion events and author visits in addition to the Ministry of Education provision of stock into schools. When librarians in the independent schools were interviewed, they identified a range of activities which they used to help create a reading culture which supported the ‘literate school’. These included visits to libraries in the outside community, using technology involving school media activities and broadcasting, organizing reading clubs and special interest groups and using book reviewing as a way of engaging students and widening their reading choices. One librarian stated that he worked with specific students – ‘Library Friends’ – training them to have skills they could pass on to other students and so making the boys themselves part of the process of engaging others (School Librarian, ABTS, 2009).

As part of the move to change students’ attitudes to reading, a range of strategies and approaches are being used to foster reading and literacy skills, funded by state and private organizations and encouraged by schools, with the aim of transforming children’s skills and attitudes to reading. At present the inspiration is largely coming from cultural and industry leaders rather than being driven by librarians within schools, but there are important exceptions. Thus, the British Council initiated one-month long programmes organized in different elementary schools across Qatar titled ‘Space Hop’ that encourage reading in English and developing reader identity. Bloomsbury Press Qatar is involved in organizing creative reading and writing events and activities which encourage children to read.

However there are a number of reading activities being organized within schools. One example, reported in Al Watan Qatar newspaper (Developing literacy ... 2009), was an annual family reading competition held by Al-Wajbah Girls’ Middle School. As part of a reading marathon encouraging ‘reading as a family’, girls were required to read as many stories as they could and answer a computerized questionnaire which evaluated their reading skills. This is a good example of how the library can be used not only to foster reading interest and competence among students but can also reach out to support the wider goal of national literacy.

The Ali Bin Talib boys’ middle school in Doha set up a ‘media resource centre’ in 2009, organized by a professional librarian, with 5,000 books and an electronic library containing 30,000 electronic books with the aim of developing independent learners and

critical thinkers. The Principal's vision was to develop a 'reading habit and an education learning environment that was not restricted to the classroom' (Interview with Principal, ABTS, 2009). This shows the importance of having a suitably trained librarian with the knowledge to develop a collection appropriate for a 21<sup>st</sup> century school library and the creative ideas to engage students with it, and also how essential it is for the school principal to have the library as part of the vision for developing reading and learning. The second point connects back to a key finding in the literature, that the understanding and commitment of head teachers is fundamental to successful libraries (Lance et al, 2010). The Ali Ben Talib Principal saw reading as something which goes beyond the classroom and this is reflected in the emphasis on the library as a resource and also on the high number of electronic books in the collection as part of taking reading and library outside traditional boundaries. We can compare here what American school librarian Joyce Valenza says about reading and the 21<sup>st</sup> century librarian, below in Figure 6.5:

**You know you are a 21<sup>st</sup> century librarian if:**

- You consider new ways to promote reading. You are piloting/supplying learners with downloadable audio books, Playaways, Kindles, iPads, Nooks;
- You share ebook apps with students for their iPhones, droids and iPads and other mobile devices;
- You market, and your students share, books using social networking tools like Shelfari, Good Reads or LibraryThing;
- Your students blog or tweet or network in some way about what they are reading;
- Your desktop screensavers promote great reads, not Dell or Apple or HP;
- You link to available free ebook collections using such tools as Google Books, International Children's Digital Library;
- You review and promote books in your own blogs and wikis and other websites;
- You embed ebooks on your websites to encourage reading and support learning;
- You work together with learners to create and share digital booktalks or book trailers

**Figure 6.5:** Manifesto for 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Librarians (taken from Valenza, 2010)

She puts emphasis on the importance of exploiting digital books and tools to promote reading and to engage with students. At the same time it is helpful to note that the Ali Bin Talib school library also has print books. It is important that students are

encouraged to read traditional print as well as e-formats because it helps to develop their reading skills and their ability to engage with print for longer periods which helps to build reading stamina. Students can learn more about the reading process, about creative use of print and about reading for pleasure if they have access to books in a variety of media. This desire to encourage reading through a range of media has implications for the technology support. At present the question of the right choice of e-reader or other platform for accessing e-and app-books is challenging many school libraries in the United Kingdom.

Librarians are considering the problem of using e-readers such as Kindles which are convenient, designed for longer periods of text reading and can be preloaded with e-titles but tie the user to Amazon retailing, or to choose another brand such as Nexus 7. The range is changing rapidly at present, with different readers offering alternative features such as eye-friendly lighting or different download formats. Schools in the UK are working out the practical management and licensing implications of lending pre-loaded e-readers to students, or of allowing time-limited downloads of subscribed e-books from a library catalogue to a personal device . As Qatar is aiming to provide all students with an iPad to access digital resources and student learning record, there will not be the same problem of choice of e-readers or the problems of lending devices pre-loaded devices.

There will however remain implications for subscription or purchase decisions for the e-title collection. The question of the challenge for reading development of the relationship between the library as collection and the iPad (or other device) as holder of an ‘e-library’ for individual student use is important. Gildersleeves (Discussion at supervision session, 2010) noted that she observed on a visit to Sweden that a school in Lund experimented in 2008 with personal student tablets for 12-year-olds, and that this showed signs of reducing student use of the library for non-study-specific reading. As a result the school had to introduce a variety of reading promotions to encourage students to develop their reading skills and interests to compensate for over-reliance on the selection of tablet-based resources.

Qatar National Children’s Cultural Council (QNCCC) organized a wide range of activities that are centred on the development of reading and creativity in March 2011.

The basis of this was a study of 60 nine year olds that took place between the University of Qatar and QNCCC which showed that children enjoyed reading, particularly aloud to their family and friends. This, like the Al-Wajbah Girls' School reading promotion, shows how important the interaction of families is for children's reading (Developing literacy ... 2009). This is confirmed by a substantial body of evidence from research in the UK which shows the influence of family involvement in children's literacy development (e.g. Elkin and Kinnell 2000; Ross *et al.* 2006; Rankin and Brock, 2009). School librarians therefore need to find ways of connecting with families. These might be specific reading programmes directed at families - see e.g. the *Getting the blokes on board* initiative (National Literacy Trust 2008) – or it might be simple actions like the Abingdon School Library's temporary picture book box which is put out for browsing whenever the school is open to the public, so that younger siblings can be involved while the focus is on their older brothers (Abingdon School visit).

Children's literacy levels are not a problem only for Qatar. A significant number of children in the UK have reading levels below the expected national standards. UK school librarians are involved in a wide range of activities designed to hook students into reading and to support their reading progress. These include many book weeks, reading clubs, activities, quizzes, creative writing and competitions organized both by the librarian and in conjunction with the school. Librarians also coordinate parents and older students to act as reading mentors for younger students who need the extra support to build their literacy- eg Bacon's College *reading buddies* (Bacon's College, Library website).

Events tie in to national and international book days, sport, cultural or science programmes and into book awards. Each year students aged 11-13 are involved in 'shadowing' the Carnegie and Greenaway Medal awards (CILIP, Carnegie and Greenaway shadowing website). This is organized jointly between schools and CILIP who administer these prestigious children's book awards. The students read the shortlists of titles and choose the books they feel should win. Discussion events are run and students can post their reviews and comments on the award website. This is a good way of getting students to engage with new quality fiction and to use their reading and critical skills in inter-school collaboration and in a national event. Three of the schools which the author visited in Abingdon are part of a consortium organized by their

librarians, to use this award shadowing to get their students involved with the books and to share in the organization of supporting activities linked to the shadowing, such as arranging for authors to visit the schools. This was interesting because the consortium partners are a private boys' school (Abingdon School), a private girls' school (St Helen and St Katharine) and three state-run secondary schools, and this was an example of the benefit of library-based collaboration in building communication across the private and state division, and private support (through collaborative funding of author visits, better space for shared activities etc.) of the local state schools (St Helen and St Katharine visit).

Librarians are also involved in using schemes such as the *Accelerated Reader* programme (Renaissance Learning – Accelerated Reader Enterprise website) to support school literacy. This involves subscribing to a commercially-run book assessment scheme where each title is graded by reading ability level and is backed by an online quiz. Students can choose books matched to their reading level or to stretch their reading skills; when they read a title they can then do the quiz and the system will keep a record of the pupil's progress. In some schools this has become a major activity within the library's role in supporting reading.

Librarian Anna Semmens of Bacon's College, London, noted that in the mid 2000s the school had identified a significant problem with literacy levels of incoming 11 year olds and had made reading skills a top priority (Sammens, 2009). As part of this, the library adopted *Accelerated Reader* and increased its stock to support this. All students in years 7 and 8 (11-13 year olds) had regular library classes and those with particular literacy difficulties had intensive reading partner support. It is interesting to note that in 2012, as these original supported students have begun to complete their secondary education, Bacon's College recorded its best ever exam results (Bacon's College, Examination Results 2012, website). However, this observation cannot by itself do anything more than hint at a possible correlation of value of the library and reading focus input – there is no concrete evidence of specific contributory or causal links or ruling out of other factors.

There is some recent anecdotal evidence, gathered from informal comments from librarians in London academy schools in 2011 and 2012 at events and training

workshops, supporting this problem. The stress placed by head-teachers on driving up literacy standards helps to build up recognition of the school library as an important part of reader development. However, the broader development of ‘literacies’, including information literacy, is seen as a teaching responsibility and the librarian is either not allowed to engage in this or is given little opportunity to support student development. Semmens also noted (2009) that this total emphasis on reading support had meant that there was no time available for the librarian to develop students’ independent learning skills – something that has begun to change as the library now (2012) runs ‘comprehensive information literacy skills for Year 7s (Bacon’s College, Library website). Ideally the school library would be recognized for how it can contribute across the range of student development, but this experience of London academy schools may suggest that concentrating on one aspect is an important starting point in building the relationship with teaching colleagues and establishing school management understanding and confidence in the value of the school library.

It is possible however that too much focus on encouraging students to see use of the library’s resources as part of pursuing literacy improvement might put students off reading at all or that the pleasure in reading is damaged by limiting student choice to material which has an educational goal. The 2002 PISA study reported that UK children ranked highly for functional literacy but very low for their enjoyment and motivation to be readers for pleasure, and it is an important part of librarians’ work to find ways of promoting this pleasure. Younger primary students at Chandlings prep school commented that they were sometimes frustrated at being discouraged by teachers from having a free choice of reading from their school library (Chandlings visit). However, it should be noted that this school overall had a very open and flexible approach to promoting reading, encouraging students from the earliest years to go independently to the library at registration or in break times, to choose and change over their ‘home reading’ books regularly and whenever they wanted. Librarians also face the challenge of deciding whether it is better to arrange fiction material according to the reading levels of titles, or to present stock in thematic or other ways more appealing to encourage readers to follow their interests and suited to extending reading beyond the familiar. Whatever the debate, Lancaster (2012) in presenting his school case study (Monk’s Walk School), reminds librarians that the more a child enjoys reading the more they will do it and the more they do it the more proficient they will become. Improving

your reading has a direct impact on your learning and your understanding. It is one of the reasons why a library is at the heart of a school. It is the only place that links everything together (Lancaster 2012:3).

His claim is that school librarians are effectively placed to monitor impact using a range of monitoring and tracking strategies including reading tests; drop in sessions; use of Kindles and iPads; use of Reading for Pleasure plans and student interviews, all help to create data for the school to use. These data show that the use of these approaches not only raise student levels of reading and achievement, but also raise the profile and status of the school library and staff.

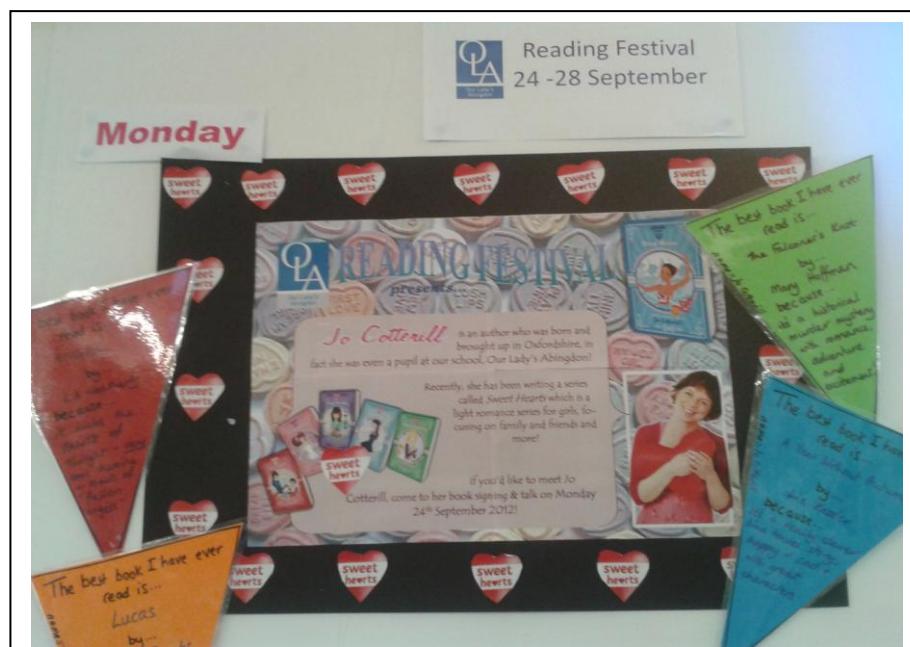
#### **6.4 Promotion of the school library**

Promotion is a very important part of encouraging reading interest, literacy skills and greater use of the library by students. The literature review identified many types of promotional activity, ranging from displays of recently published titles, student involvement in book reviewing and in jacket design, improved cataloguing and access to both stock and to the library itself, through to specific events such as author visits or school book weeks (Bates, 2000:173). Gildersleeves (Discussion at supervision session, 2009) argues that promotion is part of the whole presence of the library within the school community, and that it covers everything from how the library space and collection are presented and made available through to advocacy, and that promotion is therefore about hooking students into reading and learning but also about communication of what the library does and how it benefits the school. She argues that it is helpful if the school library has a clearly recognizable ‘brand’ within and as part of the overall school mission and that the librarian looks for as many opportunities, large and small, to use this to put the library in the eyes of users.

School libraries can show what they do to parents by being available on school open days, eg. St Helen and St Katharine School (observational visit) invites families to tour the library facilities. They can be involved in other days when parents are likely to be in school, eg Chandlings School and Abingdon School both use the library as a space for parent evenings, and Sponne School and Larkmead School (observational visits) both use their libraries from time to time for parent and student counselling sessions or Connexions careers advice meetings. However it is possible that schools that do this

may simply be using the library because there is no other suitable space available, so it is important to consider what message is being sent out about both the library and school facilities generally. One way of using this as a promotional opportunity is to create displays and special features linked to student programmes or to particular resources such as careers information, which will be prominently on show when the library is used for meetings.

Equally, library-run activity material can be displayed prominently elsewhere or in the school where parents and public may see how the library promotes reading and wider development in students. Thus, for example, Our Lady's Abingdon (OLA) visit displays student reviews, posters and other participation materials in the school corridors near to the library but also creates feature displays at key times of the year, such as school book week, in the entrance hall where parents come to collect children and gather socially whenever the school puts on events, such as concerts or open days.



**Figure 6.6:** Extract from Book Week ‘daily picture diary’ on display in school entrance hall, Our Lady’s Abingdon School

Chandlings School (Chandlings observational visit), like many schools, runs an annual Book Week in which teachers and children dress up as a favourite book character, create a giant ‘tree’ of book review ‘leaves’, host various author and illustrator speakers

and runs different additional activities. Chandlings School has also run a joint librarian/staff/parent reading discussion group, which met three times a year to suggest, read and discuss interesting new fiction for the library and was an opportunity for staff and parents to look at titles which might be considered challenging or problematic for inclusion in a prep school library. By running this discussion group the school library was able to build a connection with parents, keep staff and parents informed of new authors and titles which would expand their own knowledge of children's fiction and share responsibility in considering the advantages and drawbacks of challenging titles. University College School (observational visit) encourages students to experiment with unfamiliar authors by running a Mystery Book scheme, where the librarians choose titles which will stretch students' reading and wrap them up as mystery parcels. Students can choose something completely unexpected or can choose within a genre and are rewarded for reading and sharing their views on the mystery book.

In recent years, promotional activity includes exploiting the internet, the library website and Web 2.0 technologies to advertise the library and books via library homepages and screensavers, to inform and involve students, staff and perhaps parents in discussing reading interests and posting comments via blogs and tweets and to alert them to library activities with text messages or RSS feeds. An example is the participation of the various schools internationally in the Dulwich College network, where students can use a social network tool, Destiny myQuest, to record and share their personal reading record (Dulwich College Suzhou – website). Web 2.0 and social media can be used to give e-access to promotional resources and activities such as by providing podcasts of interesting talks. Valenza (2010) and Bradnock (2012) include the use of social bookmarking tools to encourage librarians, staff and students all to become collaboratively involved in sharing reading suggestions and suggests librarians make use of tools like Skype to connect students with experts, authors and one another. Robinson, cited in Bradnock, presents examples from her school case study of the opportunities that are available to school librarians in terms of professional networks and the sharing of ideas and knowledge 'in today's challenging times with budget cuts and pressure on jobs' (Bradnock 2012:47). Bradnock also describes using student-generated cloud tagging as a way of getting students to share ideas about their reading, working with her English department on reading literature and building note skills by

getting students to tweet summaries of the literature titles read, and she encourages the library to use its homepage to host a range of links to Web 2.0 tool.

There are many practical examples of how school libraries are using promotion to encourage both reading and library awareness. In the United Kingdom, school libraries are involved in obviously reading-related local, national and international events by participating in International Poetry Day or in National Book Week or by taking part in local area Book Award Schemes. However school libraries also take advantage of broader or significant events, to make a reading connection, such as Black History Month or by making the library a focal point at religious festivals. School libraries also collaborate with local public libraries, both for major reading initiatives like the Summer Reading Challenge in which students are encouraged to continue their reading over summer vacations by reading at least six books to gain a certificate and through local activities including visits between public and school libraries, display of student work in public libraries and sharing of costs of authors or performers between schools and public libraries. An interesting example of this kind of collaboration is where one school hosts a visiting author or speaker and the talk is video-streamed live to partner schools, and students from all the participating schools can feed their questions live to the author. The video file is then made available after the event as an archived podcast through the libraries' websites.

What is clear from the many different promotional activities, both of the school library overall and for development of students' reading and learning involvement, is that there are a huge number of different opportunities and ideas. These can be very simple, such as a poster, themed reading suggestions on the library website or attractive shelf guiding, through to a substantial programme of author visits or librarian/teacher collaborations.

From talking with United Kingdom librarians on observational visits or informally at conferences, it is clear that they value the sharing of ideas with colleagues. In some cases this can be provided through formal sessions or workshops at conferences or training days - such as the display training offered by London Borough of Tower Hamlets Education Library Service (observational visit) - and there are many published guides on promotion for school libraries (eg. from SLA, ALA). However, librarians

also rely heavily on informal networking by asking each other for suggestions eg via School Librarians Network (SLN) or discussion lists and by sharing ideas through online resource banks (eg TES). Examples of Qatari promotional activities have been discussed earlier but it is evident that the extended network of sharing of ideas and practice is as yet not established in Qatar.

## **6.5 Information Literacy**

Information Literacy develops the skills of inquiry, thinking critically, researching, accessing and using knowledge safely and ethically to solve problems, and supports the creation and sharing of knowledge. It is central to all learners whether at school or in higher education especially since so much information is accessed through e-resources, the internet, library databases in electronic or paper forms and where schools and universities use virtual learning environments (VLEs) to support learning.

Three major themes emerged from the literature:

- i. the role of the school librarian: school librarians have a key role in developing the information literacy skills needed by young learners and their teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (UNESCO 2006; School Libraries Work! 2008; Dubber 2009; Dickinson and Mardis 2010; Streatfield et al 2010; CILIP 2010);
- ii. the opportunity for school librarians to use their skills: the main issue that emerged was that school librarians have information literacy skills but are unable to use them to support students and teachers in developing the curriculum and students' learning unless they are acknowledged as central resource by headteachers. Where this occurs and the value of school librarians is recognized by headteachers, they are given a central role within the school management leading on which information literacy for the whole of the school may be built (Van Deusen 1996; Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock 2001; Lance et al, 2007; Kachel et al, 2011);
- iii. systematic learning of information literacy skills: the quality of students' information literacy skills was suggested to be fragmented especially where

information literacy skills were not taught in a systematic way across the curriculum throughout the school. This was seen to have a major impact on the potential learning and achievement of students progressing to further and high education (Crawford and Irving 2007) as they lacked the necessary skills to research and use information and digital resources appropriately and understand cyber-information responsibly (Dubber 1999, Rowlands et al 2008).

Guided Information Literacy is seen as a key factor in supporting students' learning (ALA 1998:9), and research (Pickering Thomas, 2004:24; Smith: 2002:49) highlights the importance of information literacy for students in preparing them for Further and Higher Education and lifelong learning. Loertscher (1996) in Pickering Thomas (2004:119), describes the "information literate student" as "an avid reader," a critical and creative thinker, and "an interested learner" who uses technology skillfully and investigates, organizes and communicates what is learnt in a responsible manner.

The school library is central to the development of Information Literacy which UNESCO (Horton, 2007) defines as the skill set, attitudes and knowledge necessary to know when information is needed to help solve a problem or make a decision; how to articulate that information need in searchable terms and language, then search efficiently for the information, retrieve it, interpret and understand it, organize it, evaluate its credibility and authenticity; assess its relevance; communicate it to others if necessary, then utilize it to accomplish bottom-line purposes. The UK CILIP definition of information literacy extends this to ethical and responsible use of information (CILIP, 2004). Information Literacy is closely related to 'learning to learn', and 'critical thinking', both of which may be established formal educational goals, but their teaching is often not clearly integrated into curricula or lesson plans.

The literature review identified the recurring themes of thinking skills (Dymoke and Harrison 2008), problem solving and reflective learning (Dillon and Maguire 2007; Dymoke and Harrison 2008; Petty 2009; Gray *et al*, 2005a), and the importance of these in stimulating student engagement with learning and their ability to transfer their skills into a variety of contexts (Dillon and Maguire 2007; Dymoke and Harrison, 2008). It showed that these were all key issues in pedagogy and skills that teachers and school principals seek to develop in students who are to become effective

independent learners. These skills are all areas where school librarians can be valuable partners in teaching alongside curriculum colleagues and in supporting their work, and in helping students to appreciate and use their research skills outside the silos of individual subjects. As seen above, the extent to which the school library is allowed to fulfil developing and supporting all these information literacy skills depends greatly on how school principals recognize the power of collaboration between library and teachers in building student skills.

The Ali Bin Talib school Principal's perception of the library as a key part of the integrated development of "reading habit and an education learning environment that was not restricted to the classroom" (Interview with Principal, ABTS, 2009) captures the importance of the wider value of information literacy in lifelong learning – which requires students to be able, independently, to understand and apply their skills and knowledge beyond the teacher-supported environment of the classroom.

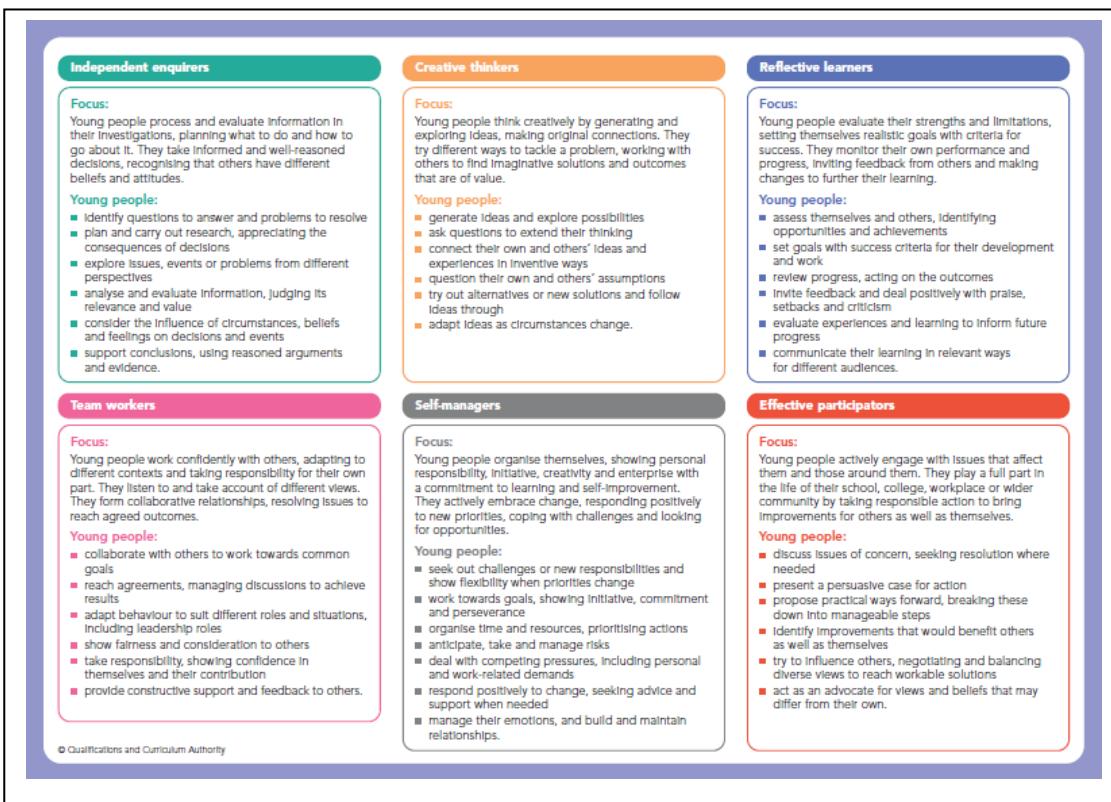
The informal comments of some London academy school librarians (made in conversation at conference workshops and School Library Association training days) identified that their school management saw research skills as purely academic skills built within subject context and therefore falling outside the 'reading development' role of the school library. To some extent within the United Kingdom education context this reflects an employment status division between academic staff (curriculum teachers and managers) and support staff (all other staff). The implications and misunderstanding at the root of this status issue will be discussed in the final section of this chapter. Whatever the reason, the consequence has been that these academies have placed development of information literacy wholly within the responsibility of teachers and excluded librarians from any part in this. However, Webb (n.d. unpublished article) notes that from teachers' perspective, information literacy is not really understood. Webb cites Bundy (2004) and Irving and Crawford (2007) indicating that the general perception of teachers is that information literacy is seen as an unnecessary addition to their workload.

A further issue is identified in the DEMOS report *Truth, Lies and the Internet* (Bartlett and Miller, 2011) which surveyed more than 500 teachers in the United Kingdom. The report found that while the vast majority regarded internet-based research as essential

for students they also regarded student skills here as very poor. Teachers identified the skills as applying across the curriculum and suggested a variety of subjects within which lessons might be situated. Despite believing in the importance of building appropriate skills, a quarter of the teachers also reported a lack of confidence to teach and develop these. A greater number noted that they would want more training themselves before tackling information literacy teaching. 16.9% of the teachers stressed a lack of time in the curriculum (Bartlett and Miller 2011:33-34). Perhaps related to this lack of time and confidence, the report also found that “only one third of 9-19 year old have been taught how to judge the reliability of online information” (Bartlett and Miller 2011:5). Therefore, if Bundy, Irving and Crawford (as noted in Webb, n.d. unpublished article) and Bartlett and Miller are all correct in identifying real concerns with teacher understanding of and confidence with information literacy teaching, this raises significant concerns if schools place the burden of this wholly on teachers, ignoring the contribution of librarians.

Renee Hobbs (2010) of the Aspen Institute reminds us that although young people use digital media, we should not assume that they are digitally literate. A key recommendation arising out of the DEMOS report was that digital literacy skills should be specifically built into the curriculum. It is recognized that students can be very effective researchers and information users within the particular classroom or subject environment where the information skills have been taught, but that they can find it hard to transfer these skills to a different subject context. At the same time it has been noticed that if information literacy concepts and skills are taught as generic, outside of specific contexts, students can find it much harder to see the relevance of the skills for their own benefit and to understand how to apply them according to need (Payton, 2012). This apparent contradiction raises issues for how and where information literacy should be placed in the curriculum and who should teach the skills. Because the school library supports the whole school rather than any one subject it is well placed to help with bridging the subject divide when engaging students with research skills. However if information literacy is seen only as ‘library skills’ and taught only by the school librarian, this risks the problems of their being seen as separate to subjects and being de-contextualized.

This reflects the concerns of those in the United Kingdom interested in information literacy at school level. Various attempts have been tried to make thinking or research skills a part of the curriculum. The English curriculum frameworks set out the content and the learning skills that students should gain for each subject and there is a separate summary of Personal Learning and Thinking Skills across the curriculum as a whole, with links back to subject-specific pages on how these relate to the individual subject frameworks (QCA undated).



**Figure 6.7: Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (QCA undated)**

Having a framework of this sort for how thinking skills relate to individual subject contexts is helpful, whether there is a formal national curriculum (as in the United Kingdom) or a more flexible general expectation of teaching coverage. As Qatar has moved away from a centrally defined Ministry of Education programme towards greater autonomy of independent schools in deciding how the Qatar national curriculum should be developed and taught, there is a greater need now for such a thinking skills ‘map’ to support principals and teachers. However there have been many concerns that despite

aspects of these skills being spelled out in the UK subject frameworks, they are still not being taught or that students are not recognizing them and seeing the importance of them. Within the United Kingdom, both Scotland and Wales have each been developing a new curriculum approach aiming to set out a progression of skills from the earliest stages of education through to university and adult learning.

A *UK Information Literacy in Schools Taskforce*, bringing together representatives from CILIP, the School Library Association, higher education and the government department for education, has been working on ways to make the inclusion of information literacy in the English curriculum more effective. This taskforce has noted that school librarians want an easy-to-use bank of practical materials that they can use or adapt within their own school context. There are various places where information and materials are being collected by librarians in the United Kingdom, whether through the Information Literacy Website (<http://www.informationliteracy.org.uk/>) or through informal sharing via School Librarians Network (SLN), a yahoo community. Similarly, there have been a number of different online sharing spaces for teachers, such as TeacherNet, but the permanence of these seems to be affected by changes in central government strategy. It seems as if a difficulty in the United Kingdom is that although librarians participate in mutual support networks and there are resource banks, the variety of these can be confusing and there is no obvious place where librarians and teachers expect to go to find good practice resources for information literacy. Two areas of concern identified by the UK Information Literacy in Schools Taskforce were that despite the skills being recognized within pedagogy textbooks, it is not clear how far trainee teachers are taught how to develop the skills in their students or whether head teachers are expected within education strategy to see the skills as a priority; research in the UK is currently exploring this (Gildersleeves 2011, Discussion in supervision session).

This raises the question for how information literacy skills and ways of developing them in school students are included in Qatari teacher training. Investigation of this point was outside the scope of this research but could be a useful area of further study.

The DEMOS report also accidentally highlighted another issue: Bartlett and Miller completely ignored the potential and actual contribution of school librarians.

Subsequent discussion by the UK Information Literacy in Schools Taskforce with Bartlett and Miller showed that this was not so much a deliberate view that librarians had no role, as lack of awareness of the skills and activities of school librarians (Gildersleeves, 2011, Discussion in supervision session). However the incident shows that both teachers and those involved in policy are often unaware of school libraries and that there is a need for librarians to do more to promote their role and contribution.

In an attempt to get away from the traditional ‘librarians as keepers of books’ view held by librarians in many of the Gulf States, the Joint Committee of the Ministry of Education and the University of Qatar worked together in 1998 to produce a series of instructional booklets on library education in school libraries, including *Teaching Library Skills in School Libraries in Qatar*. The booklets were intended to provide guidelines and the latest trends and practice in the field of librarianship. Whilst this broadening of the awareness of librarians concerning their potential contribution to learning in schools was a crucial first step towards the wider engagement in reader development and student independent thinking skills, the learning context has changed greatly since 1998. This change includes both the new educational system and goals of the Supreme Education Council and the global shift to a digital information environment. There is therefore a real need for this training and support material to be updated for the 21<sup>st</sup> century context. Furthermore, the booklets were aimed at librarians, not teachers, and such advice material could usefully be extended to provide awareness and guidelines to teachers about the benefit of a partnership approach to ensuring that students gain the skills in a variety of ways in the curriculum.

The School Librarian Association recommends that the skills needed to research and handle information need to be 'taught explicitly and regularly practiced' (Harrison 2001:16). Harrison suggests that the use of the library to research subject information for course work and homework is monitored by teachers; that children know how to search and are encouraged to become confident users of a range of information sources, classification schemes, subject indexes and catalogues; and that the library skills teaching is done in relation to the curriculum and reinforced with every year group. According to McCracken (2001), media manager at Govan High School in Glasgow, there are many assumptions that teachers make which need to be challenged, including that pupils will be able to transfer skills, know how to make – as compared to take –

notes, will avoid plagiarism and will know how to recognize what is accurate versus inaccurate information. McCracken argues that the librarian can play a key role in addressing these assumptions, show teachers the benefits of library sessions and act as a hub between departments and facilitate skill transferability. He recommends that skills are clearly labelled in a way that is shared by everybody and will lead to development of the skills in a coherent way across the curriculum.

This connects to the third key issue identified from the literature – the need to address fragmentation of information literacy skills. Practical experience has shown that if individual teachers and school librarians are trying to build information literacy in isolation from each other, students find it harder to make the connections, practice the skills in different contexts and be motivated to learn the skills. One way of tackling this fragmentation is to have a *whole school information literacy strategy*. This is a shared interpretation of what information literacy is and a coordinated approach to developing the skills across all subjects and all years of the student education. The library should be built into this whole school strategy as a key resource and as a deliverer of information literacy teaching, practice and assessment. Several leading school librarians in the United Kingdom have been closely involved in the creation of such strategies, notably Barrett, Tarter, Varley and Webb. Varley proposes (n.d. Unpublished article) that the commitment of the head-teacher and senior management, supporting the partnership with the school librarian and teaching colleagues is central to ensuring that information literacy becomes integrated within the curriculum across the school. She reports the transformation of research skills initiatives within Sponne School, once she and the Head of the English Department had brought a whole school strategy to management and it was adopted by all staff. CILIP offers practical guidance on creating and running such strategies (Barrett and Douglas 2004).

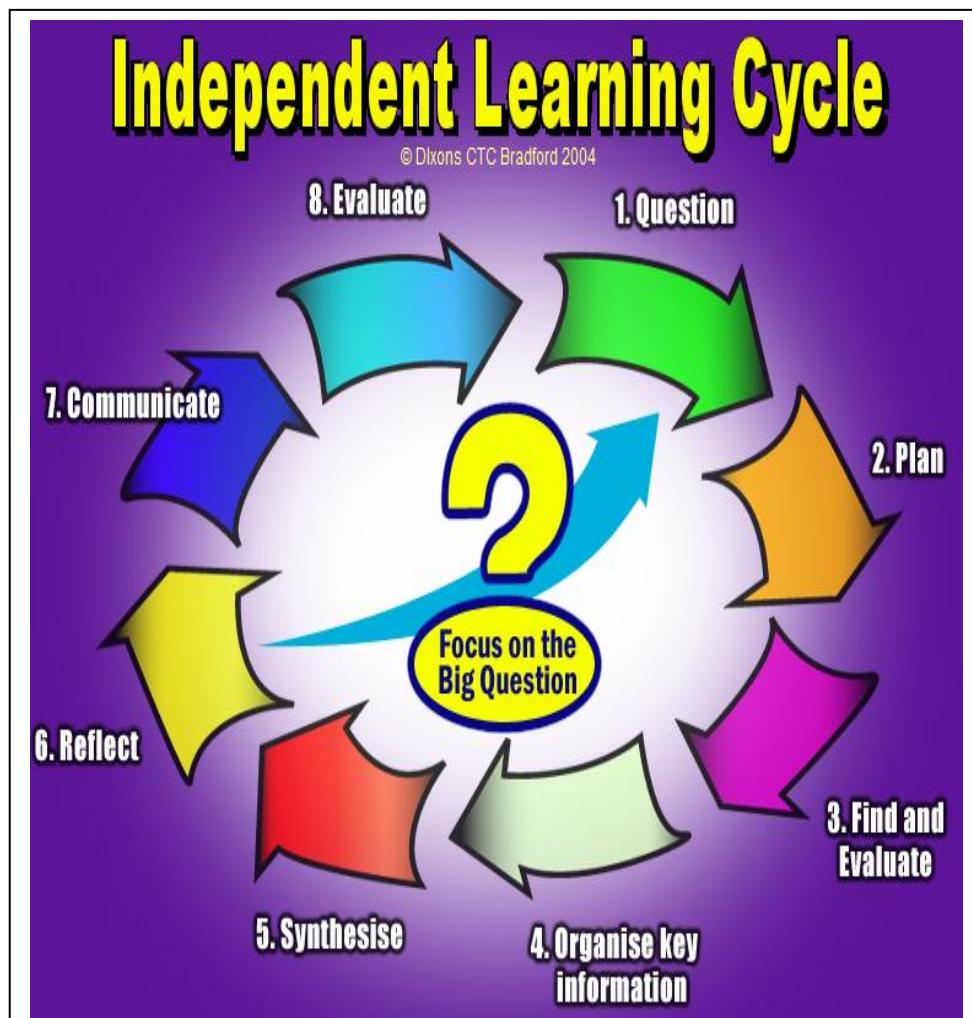
The author's research failed to identify any examples of a whole school information literacy strategy actually operating in Qatar. This does not necessarily mean that there are no schools now taking a whole school approach, but certainly it is not something commonly recognized at present. The Ministry of Education set a requirement for public schools to teach information literacy sessions. However, these were not seen as part of a whole school responsibility and collaborative approach to developing student skills. They were examples of an attempt to fix information literacy in the curriculum,

but did not necessarily provide subject contextualization across the student's whole experience at school.

When surveying public and independent school librarians, although the librarians surveyed were not able to claim that their school had a coherent information literacy programme, a number made recommendations about what should happen. Their suggestion was that an information literacy programme should be integrated either into the taught curriculum, or be allocated timetabled lessons where it was taught to all students. In this way it would be possible to ensure that all students became confident users of information literacy, which when developed over time, could support them as lifelong learners. The librarians felt that being seen as a key resource and part of the school management team was central to the ability of the school librarian to promote information literacy, working with both students and teachers to support learning. It can be seen from this that there is the recognition and will for a planned approach among Qatari school librarians, but that they are divided in how this should best be managed. There is therefore a need for school librarians, teachers and principals, working together, to be aware of the evidence about the advantages and problems with different approaches to integrating information literacy, and for practical guidance and examples of how a whole school policy and collaborative partnership between teachers and the school library could be established.

Barrett and Danks in Tarter and Barrett (2005) emphasize the iterative nature of the learning process and the collaboration between teachers and librarians in building student skills. As a part of tracing this they developed a cyclical representation of the research process, in contrast to more linear models such as the Big 6 (Big6) or EXIT (Wray and Lewis, 1995), shown in Figure 6.8 below. Bent and Stubbings (2011) in the UK SCONUL 7 Pillars model of information literacy aims to show the various skills elements involved for higher education and how these are continuously developed across the lower and higher order levels of understanding (as proposed by Bloom et al., 1956 *in* Dymoke and Harrison, 2008:62-3). As part of supporting this continuous development, Barrett and Danks created a personal student progression chart to go with their school model, helping students and staff to map out where and at what level the student had learned and demonstrated their understanding of particular skills. This ties back to McCracken's (2005) concern that there needs to be a shared framework and

labeling of the skills across all subjects. This chart design can be seen below in Figure 6.8.



**Figure 6.8:** Independent Learning Cycle, developed by Barrett and Danks  
(Tarter and Barrett, 2005)

Level	Questioning	Planning	Identifying and evaluating sources	Organizing key information	Synthesising	Reflecting Evaluating Reviewing	Communicating
Entry							
Foundation							
Intermediate							
Advanced							

**Figure 6.9:** Student progression chart, developed by Barrett and Danks (Tarter and Barrett 2005)

Having a framework of progression where student attainment is charted suggests that teachers and librarians need to work together to record where skills are taught and also where they are used effectively by students. This means that teachers and librarians need to build into student assignments active demonstration of research skills. Tarter and Barrett (2005) have proposed that this could be done by asking students to submit draft work showing the building up of gathering and synthesis of information leading towards the final work submitted. They suggest also that students keep mind maps of the research planning process and record sheets of sources consulted which could be submitted as part of an assignment. Tarter (Tarter and Barrett 2005) has argued that it is important that students are given credit for showing their use of research skills, as part of developing student awareness of the benefits of information literacy to their studies, a point also emerging from the literature review (Loertscher 2002). She worked with teaching colleagues to develop a marking approach in which the subject teacher awarded credit for the subject content and understanding, the librarian gave credit for evidence of research skills used and the ICT teacher gave credit for effective use of technology in managing and presenting the work. In this way students could see the expectation for wider learning in the work set.

Year		
Subject		
Feedback comments	Grade	Marked by
Subject content		
Research skills use		
ICT use		

**Figure 6.10:** Assignment marking sheet by AM Tarter (Tarter and Barrett, 2005)

Tarter stressed that it is not helpful to load every student assignment or activity with detailed or repetitive information literacy testing, but that by selective use of research skill use evidence in different subjects and for different year groups, students could be expected to build up and demonstrate relevant use and increasing depth of understanding of research skills in all subjects by the time they have completed their studies, which could be mapped on the personal skills progression chart.

As Qatar moves towards students holding a personal digital record of progress, accessible to the student, teachers and parents, there is an opportunity for a similar map of thinking and research skills to be recorded, including the school librarian as a hub with overview of where research skills are taught and tested across the subject discipline divisions of the curriculum as a whole and as one of the teaching and learning partners.

Varley (n.d. Unpublished article.) notes that an important element in her mix of approaches to building information literacy is having a speaker from the local university come in to talk to the upper school students about the value of research skills in higher education. The students are encouraged to see how and why the information skills they are developing at school will benefit their later studies, to understand the significance of ethical use of different forms of information in their studies, and to feel comfortable with using libraries before going on to higher education.

Goodall and Pattern's research at Huddersfield University (2011) demonstrated a clear correlation between the level of library resource use by students and their final degree classification. Whilst the research did not claim to prove a direct causal relationship,

the suggestion was clearly that active and effective library users were more likely to be the students who would do better in their studies overall.

An interesting strategy reported by Lonsdale and Armstrong (2006) is that of university-school collaboration. Lonsdale and Armstrong examine the role of the university library in supporting information literacy in UK secondary schools, seeking to ensure that students coming to university are able to use library facilities and databases in their learning when at university. Their study representing the first qualitative study on this topic drawing attention to the way that universities and school libraries can collaborate to develop school pupils' information literacy skills, supporting the widening participation agenda and the use of e-resources across the secondary and tertiary education sectors in the UK. Although this type of collaboration is at an early stage, a lack of school librarian involvement was noted, highlighting the perceived lack of status of librarians. One university librarian noted:

*I personally am a strong believer that the school librarian ought to be delivering information literacy . . . We certainly try and work with school librarians. Of course it is almost impossible to get them out of their school libraries – being one man bands. I think it's a real issue because I don't think they have the status in the schools that they ought to, to give them the time to do things*

(Lonsdale and Armstrong 2006:567).

The role of information literacy to support students studying in higher education was one of the areas examined in the research carried out in Qatar. The University of Qatar lecturers interviewed recommended that school libraries needed more qualified librarians and skill-based training to prepare students for further studies as they agreed that information literacy skills 'start at school level'. They were concerned that the poor skills held by some students would affect their ability to study confidently at university where there was a reliance on independent study and research skills and the ability to access and use electronic forms of data.

There was consensus between the Qatari lecturers' questionnaire responses and that of the university librarians in their analysis of undergraduate students' library skills. Both groups tended to classify the students' library skills as 'poor to very poor', agreeing that the students 'are poorly prepared to use the library' or have 'no library experience'. Only

three librarians of the ten stated that the students' ability to use the library was 'average or fair'. Further there was agreement in that both groups (seven in each case) reported that students' ability to carry out independent research was 'very poor'. The librarians agreed that the new student intake's motivation to use the library, in addition to their competence, 'was poor'. The university lecturers suggested that students needed training and short courses in using a library, whilst one lecturer specified that students also needed close supervision and guidance whilst using the library.

Similarly, the librarians commented on the main limitations being that the students had no background knowledge on how to use the library as they were neither trained to use the library or capable of doing advanced searches, adding that some students had poor English language skills which, depending on the subject, impeded library and internet searches. This is of concern in that poor information literacy skills, coupled with limited technology skills, at university were likely to have a negative effect on students' ability to carry out research for assignments and preparation for examinations. Although there was no hard evidence offered to back up their belief, seven of the fifteen lecturers stated that from their experience, students coming to university from private schools had better library and research skills, a view that was supported by the librarians questioned.

In order to understand how public school students engage with their school library, which might shed light on why they come to university with poor library skills, a questionnaire was given to students from primary, middle and secondary public schools in Qatar, of which 110 were returned. The survey revealed that students had used their school libraries for a range of different purposes. Figure 6.11 identifies the use which Qatari students make of the library to support their learning and leisure.

Type of library use by students	%
to carry out their homework	28.68
to develop their library skills	25.60
for subject study	24.83
For leisure activities (reading for pleasure, browsing the Internet and using Internet for checking e-mails and games)	20.89

**Figure 6.11:** Students' use of the library (Rank order)

Table 6.11 shows that the largest number (28.7%) of public school students used the library to carry out their homework, with slightly decreasing numbers using it to improve their library skills (25.6%), to support subject study (24.83%) and for leisure purposes (20.9%).

The survey to parents in 2008 revealed that 78.1% (50) of parents stated that their child brought home library books from school to read for pleasure and that their child's teachers had shown them the school library (51.5% (33).

Frequency which library is used to carry out homework	%
Has never used the library to carry out homework	32.73
Used the library once a day	18.80
Once a term	17.27
Used the library once a week	16.36
Once a month	12.73
Don't know	2.73

**Figure 6.12:** Frequency which the library is used by students to carry out homework  
(Rank order)

It is interesting to note that 32.73% of students did not use the library to carry out their homework, and of those that did so, only 18.8% used it daily. Fewer students (16.36%) used the library at least once a week with 12.73% using it only once a month. The parental survey revealed that 48.4% (31) of parents were unsure whether their child used the school library at least once a week although 29.7% (19) agreed that the library was used at least once a week by their child. This suggests that the majority of students do not see the school library as place to find information to support their homework and their learning.

One respondent claimed that their school provided lessons about what they termed 'library skills'; three responded that there were no information literacy programmes in the library, but where support was available it took the form of informing students of the importance of Information Literacy; providing information leaflets and using the support of a student group of 'library friends' to help pass on skills to other students. Of the

parents surveyed about their child's use of the school library and its facilities, 62.5% (40) stated that their children used the school library and that they brought home library books from school to help with homework (48.4%, 31). 56.2% (36) stated that their child received study skills lessons which involved the library and thought that school libraries in particular helped children to learn (54.6%, 35). 39% (25) stated that their child's school library had a large selection of regularly updated books and that their child spoke positively about the school library (39%, 25). Further, 70.3% (45) disagreed with the statement 'I don't need to know about my child's school library – that is a matter for the teachers'. 96.8% (62) of parents thought that it was important that all children should be using a school library to support their learning.

It is important to compare the above findings relating to the impact of school libraries on student achievement, with Lonsdale who notes the following five points:

- *libraries can make a positive difference to students' self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regard to their own learning;*
- *a strong library program that is adequately staffed, resourced and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socioeconomic or educational levels of the adults in the community;*
- *a strong computer network connecting the library's resources to the classroom and laboratories has an impact on student achievement;*
- *the quality of the collection has an impact on student learning;*
- *test scores are higher when there is higher usage of the school library;*  
*(Lonsdale 2003:30).*

The Ministry Authorities interviewed in Qatar acknowledged the important contribution of school libraries to learning, and suggested the following as a positive way forward:

*Transformation of school library into resource centres and utilizing digital services; The school library websites would also help students to have greater access to the library services (US, 2005)*

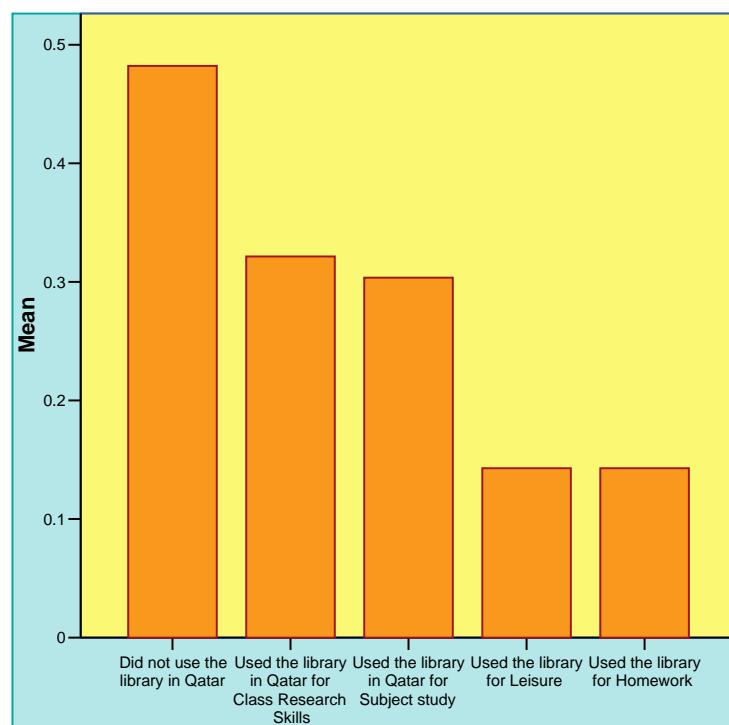
*Establishing school libraries network that would allow greater communication among the Qatari school libraries and with other school libraries worldwide (HDNC, 2005)*

*As an important tool of education, school libraries will be supported to develop and have more links with higher educational institutions (i.e. the University of Qatar) (ACA, 2005)*

### **6.5.1 Impact of lack of Information Literacy skills on students studying abroad**

An examination of UK and Ireland Higher Education programmes and course documentation undertaken as part of this thesis shows that there is a significant reliance on the use of library facilities to carry out both class and independent research to support study. Of concern is that Qatari students coming to study in the UK and Ireland may have insecure library skills which may impact on their early engagement in graduate studies and their confidence as learners and researchers. To address the lack of competent Information Literacy skills at secondary level, the author, when in his role as Head of the School Library Department, set up a team in 1998 who designed and implemented a Research Skills curriculum that all students were required to complete as part of their education (age 16-18 years) prior to progressing to Further or Higher Education. Of the parents surveyed, 98.4% (63) acknowledged that when students go to University they would need to use the library there to help with studies.

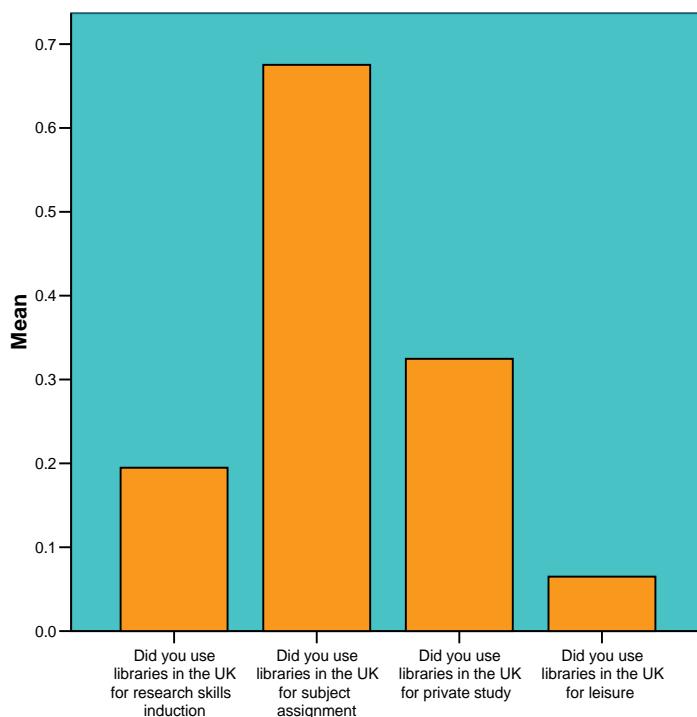
Questionnaire data from 70 Qatari students studying on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the UK and Ireland in 2006 indicated that library skills were an important aspect of studying abroad, with the majority of students (97.5%) using their university libraries to support their studies. Of these, 14% made additional use of public libraries, and 11.5% used departmental libraries. Only 2.5% of students reported that they did not use libraries at all, but when questioned further reported that they used on-line access through personal home computers and bought key texts for their own personal use.



**Figure 6.13:** Qatari students in Higher Education in the UK and Ireland – experience of using school libraries in Qatar

It is of concern to note that of the students questioned, the largest proportion (39%) had not used made use of libraries whilst studying at pre-university level in Qatar. Of the remaining, 25% reported that they had used the library to support class research skills; 23% had used the library for subject study; 16% had used the library as a venue for leisure and 10% had used it as a place to complete their homework.

These data are important in that they indicate that the majority of students coming to study in the UK and Ireland have either no history of library usage or limited library skills to support their graduate or post graduate study. Of concern is the impact that this is likely to have on their early engagement in graduate studies and their confidence as learners and researchers since scrutiny of programmes and course documentation shows that there is a significant reliance on the use of library facilities to carry out both class and independent research to support study. There is an expectation of intense library use in UK universities to support self-directed and independent study which disadvantages students who are inexperienced library users such as those from Qatar.



**Figure 6.14:** Qatari students in Higher Education in the UK and Ireland – experience of using university libraries in the UK

### Discussion

The key points that emerge from the Information Literacy section in relation to Qatar are those of a lack of systematic implementation of information literacy within schools as a consequence of the school librarian's status and skills; and the impact on the students themselves where they are unable to acquire the information literacy skills necessary to support their learning.

The lack of professional training and pay relative to that of teachers has a direct impact on the status held by school librarians, specifically effecting their ability to lead whole school developments such as information literacy that require them to work in partnership with teachers and advise on the curriculum and the role of information literacy in supporting students' learning. Where the school librarian is not recognized as part of the school's central management team, they are unable to advise or bring about a change in whole school practice. Where the school librarian lacks the skills and knowledge to support information literacy, through lack of training and lack of a

professional body to support their development, they are unable to fulfill the potential that a professional school librarian is capable of contributing to the learning of both students and teachers and students' achievement.

Although Qatar has a focus of developing and improving education, of particular concern is that information literacy skills are not developed systematically, disadvantaging students who progress to further and higher education whether in Qatar, the Gulf States, UK or Ireland. Unlike school, university study places a heavy emphasis on independent study, personal research, the use of electronic resources and databases and the fundamental use of library resources and use of information literacy to support learning.

## **6.6 The school library as a cultural force**

An additional contribution of the school library was that through its resources, it could help students to understand cultures beyond their school and country and to explore how children and young people live in other countries. This was seen as a positive contribution especially in light of the rapid educational changes taking place in Qatar and the plans that Qatar has for itself as a knowledge economy. As one independent school Principal pointed out,

*'you can travel the world by sitting in the library; you can learn about different countries, about different religions, about travel, foods, schools in different countries and what children do in their spare time'*

(AYIS, 2007)

In this way the school library has the potential to act as a cultural force at two levels, one within the school, reinforcing a school's vision as a learning organization, and the other through bringing the outside world into the school through the introduction of wider society values such as citizenship, tolerance of other nationalities, respect and understanding of other religions and health. There is a tension here: a country in the middle of rapid change, looking to the future, but at the same time recognizing that in a country of 1.75 million of whom only 250,000 are Qatari nationals (Qatar Statistics Authority October 2012), and in a country which only formally came into being in the

1950s, is a danger of Qatar losing its cultural identity. This challenge, particularly for students' home language competence, especially in the ability to discuss complex ideas in the native language has recently been noted. The concern is that where key school subjects are taught in English, students are actually losing their native language skills.

In order to explore how school libraries can contribute to students' cultural heritage it is important to define the term and to acknowledge that there are two separate parts, one that refers to physical elements and the other to 'intangible cultural heritage'. UNESCO Article 1 defines cultural and nation heritage as follows:

*For the purpose of this Convention, the following shall be considered as "cultural heritage":*

*monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;*

*groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;*

*sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view*

(UNESCO 1972).

In terms of illustrating this, the Qatar National Library and British Library project provides opportunities for students to access historical documents that focus on the history, arts, sciences, culture of the country and the role of key individuals in Qatar's development and influence. The digital presentation of documents from the East India records and other Middle East collections act as powerful reminder of history and culture. Her Highness' wish to enable students and schools to access these documents through an electronic schools portal through students' personal and school computers is to be commended (at a British Library and Qatar National Library Project Launch in November 2012 which was attended by the author as a member of the committee). This has parallels to the education provision of Art Galleries and Museums in the UK and to specific projects such as the UK Doomsday Project (1986) based on the Doomsday Book of 1086. This was originally complied as a census, recording property values of

communities and individuals in England in the mid 11<sup>th</sup> century. 900 years later a national project was run, which invited schools and communities to participate in creating a modern Doomsday record showing a picture of Britain in the 20th century. One million people took part and school libraries played an important role in collaborating and coordinating the collection of local information and in providing access to the finished resource (BBC). An interesting point arose from this relating to the use of the material created which was not as widely used as anticipated. The lesson here is that younger students in school may have limited interest in the topics and documents presented through the East India Records, however if attention was paid to ensuring that ‘child friendly’ topics and themes were created based on the archive, and related to the curriculum in school, they could offer exciting learning opportunities which could then be re explored as adults. Sheika Moza was insistent that the new Qatar National Library digital collection should be available and accessible to all, including children, parents, visitors through to academic scholars in the Middle East and internationally.

The second definition offered by UNESCO relates to definitions of ‘intangible cultural heritage’. Requests were sent by the National Commission for national definitions of the term. Of the Arab countries Kuwait responded as follows:

*Intangible Cultural Heritage is the nation's oral heritage, folklore and spiritual culture, that consists of proverbs, habits, traditions, actions and individual and communal qualities that distinguish society from others. This cultural heritage also includes family, wedding habits, arts, letters, songs, settlements and travelling, marriage and delivery, death, food, drinks, medicine and curing, typical Kuwaiti storytelling, crafts and activities of Kuwaitis in the past* (UNESCO, 2001).

These examples of ‘intangible’ cultural heritage are important when applied to Qatar in that they are vulnerable because they can be lost through not being shared with younger generations. There are important opportunities for school libraries to take a role in passing on this cultural heritage to school children and their families through storytelling; poetry; songs; rites of passage events, traditional crafts and artifacts. In doing this children and their families not only have a reason to visit the school library, but what they find there is important for them in terms of helping them to re-examine their cultural and religious heritage and identity. Where such cultural heritage is largely

of oral or social nature rather than something written or recorded, it is particularly fragile when the wider environment is rapidly changing. Longer term projects could involve children interviewing family members and extended family, recording their stories and experiences to create local archives of recordings, photographs and artifacts located within their school library.

Examples such as these help to address the tension between progress, the new and the old, and the desires expressed in the Qatari policy documents (addressed earlier) to promote awareness of national cultural heritage as well as raising awareness and “openness towards other cultures in the context of its Arab and Islamic identity” (QGSDP 2008:19), and school libraries have an opportunity to play an important role through resource provision and access and through developing student skills in critical thinking.

Considering the example of the *Improve Your Library* toolkit, the model gives a strand (2b) which specifically seeks to identify the contribution of the school library to students’ “spiritual, moral, social and cultural development”. The extract from the toolkit’s guidance notes (Table 6.15) for using this strand shows the sort of questions and evidence which could be used to examine how a school library supports cultural awareness, and this kind of framework could usefully be adjusted and developed to address the particular focus of Qatari religious, social and cultural contexts.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Types of evidence</b>	<b>Ways to collect evidence</b>
i. Do LRC resources provide pupils with information about and insights into feelings, values and beliefs; spiritual awareness and self knowledge; principles which distinguish right from wrong; and appreciation of their own and other cultural traditions?	<b>Stock/issue records</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> References to these topics in LRC policy documents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> References to aspects of the school’s Race Equality Policy in LRC policy documents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Perceptions of pupils</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of LRC displays and activities</li> </ul>	<b>Identify examples from stock lists and issue records showing coverage of these topics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make extracts from LRC policy documents relating to these aspects of collection development.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make extracts from the LRC policy documents to show commitment to these topics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interview using questions for pupils O</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep records of activities (e.g. photos, leaflets, records of responses by pupils)</li> </ul>
ii. Do pupils understand and respect individual differences, particularly feelings, values and beliefs – resisting oppressive behaviour (e.g. bullying, racism)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of observed activities in the LRC</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Perceptions of pupils</li> </ul>	<b>Observe with checklist Q</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interview using questions for pupils O</li> </ul>

**Figure 6.15:** Extract from *Improve Your Library* support for 2b (DfES 2004b)

## **6.7 The school library in the wider community**

The interviews with the policy makers from the Ministry of Education and from the Supreme Education Council were supportive of the idea of the school library as a community resource, and were very aware of the existing weaknesses in the system. The Minister stated,

*'the school library could play an educating role to the whole community, but would need more advocacy in the media to explain the importance of the school library to the community'* (ME, 2005)

The Director of the Department of School Libraries supported this view adding,

*'School libraries in Qatar only serve the school community. I would suggest that the school library should extend their services to the outside community, mainly in the remote regions where there is an absence of public libraries. This could be achieved through changing the opening times to allow the community to use their services'* (DDSL, 2005)

These comments fit well with the spirit of the Ministry of Education School Libraries Act, which proposed that the school library had a fundamental role in supporting the ‘wider community’ (see discussion above), so it is interesting that this idea of extending services was still very much a potential consideration in 2012, twenty years on from the enacting in 1992. Whilst this suggestion of extending the role of the school library more widely into the community was not put forward by the representatives of the Institute of Education or any of the independent school principals interviewed, it remains an interesting idea as part of delivering the policy concerns about raising national literacies identified in government reports of recent years noted in Chapter 5. Very recent policy developments have encouraged a new vision of the national library role and have included the introduction of a mobile library service. Qatar schools might look at the experiences of dual use libraries in the United Kingdom, where the management responsibility, premises use and staffing arrangements are worked out as a shared agreement between the public library sector and schools (Palka *et al.* 2012). The advice given is that a flexible approach where primary and secondary libraries share resources or schools and community libraries work together teaching and library staff have an opportunity to come together to share vision, goodwill, expertise and management skills to create dual use libraries that benefit both students and the community at large (Palka *et al* 2012:19).

In the majority of cases it seems that the dual use library is located on school premises although sometimes where a new building has been set up the library has been purpose built as a shared facility. McNicol investigated the opportunities and the problems faced by dual use libraries and found that they are “an ideal mechanism for developing strong links between the school and the local community” (McNicol 2003:44). However she noted that in order for the relationship to work there has to be strong commitment from both head teachers and the public library organization, a shared ethos and a clear contractual agreement on management, funding and staffing details. Having professional staff that understand the needs of all the users, was essential and so was arranging a balanced pattern of access that could allow the different user communities to make use of the library effectively and without causing problems to other users. McNicol noted that sometimes teachers were uncomfortable with public users and she suggested a possible solution would be to provide a separate teaching area within the library (McNicol 2003:44).

An examination of websites of United Kingdom dual-use school and public libraries shows that often the problem of conflict of interest in serving the different users is addressed by defining different opening hours. Thus Portslade Academy / Mile Oak Library is open only for use by the school in the mornings; afternoon use is shared and public opening hours continue into the evening after the end of the school day (Portslade Academy website). By contrast William de Ferrers / South Woodham Ferrers Library keep all day Mondays and Wednesday afternoons for the school, and the rest of the time is shared use (South Woodham Ferrers website).

If schools are to open up their libraries for regular community use, this has implications for the safety of students in ensuring that the public cannot wander around school premises. This may affect where the library can be positioned which may not be the ideal location to be at the heart of the school. It is likely that the library will need a public entrance and also a separate entrance linking it into the school (see eg Meopham School website) and there may be issues for the best levels of computer access for community and student users. There will also be implications for collection development because the library holdings will need to be both suitable to support the curriculum and student development, but also need to be relevant to support community

literacy and interests and therefore also for how the community element of the collection is funded.

Despite these practical challenges, it seems clear that opportunities include getting children and families to know their ‘school library’ before they become students there. McNicol found that most dual use libraries involved secondary schools but a few were based in primary schools (McNicol 2003:4). Possibly secondary schools have more space to hold a dual use library, or possibly the collection needs of the public fit better with the needs of secondary school students. If Qatar is to consider developing this dual community role of school libraries it may be more helpful to pilot experiments in the secondary school phase as a way of encouraging elementary school children to get to know ‘their’ secondary school. As new independent schools are built, replacing some of the earlier public schools, this could provide an opportunity to rethink the practical location and arrangements for dual use. It would also be possible for primary school libraries – even if not formally structured as dual use services - to run regular events aimed at involving families and the wider community in literacies and in supporting learning. This closer involvement of the public and of families could then become a tool in achieving the point made by the Minister of Education (above) that greater advocacy of the role of the school library is needed to help people understand its value.

## **6.8 Implications of 21<sup>st</sup> century school library management**

If it is recognized that school libraries have a key role in contributing to learning and teaching through reader development, independent learning skills, cultural engagement and support of the wider community, these all have significant implications for how the school library is managed, resourced, used and staffed.

Several core areas of school library management were identified in the literature, including strategic and practical aspects of service development and delivery. These highlight strategic policy involvement, financial management, collection development, library design and service evaluation (Tilke 2002; Barrett and Douglas 2004). This is reflected in the guidance notes produced by the Supreme Education Council in 2009 for Learning Resource Centres in Qatar’s independent schools. The guidance defines the

nature and role of a school library or learning resource centre and how this contributes to Qatar's education reform agenda and offers advice on the creation of an effective learning resource centre with guidance on the collection, library management systems, staffing, information literacy and an audit tool to enable school librarians to evaluate practice.

### **The place of the library in the school management structure**

Being part of the school management team is an important aspect. Ofsted note the key role of librarians being part of the strategic structure of the school, stating that

*In the best schools, librarians were regarded as important middle managers and encouraged to work closely with other members of staff. The most effective libraries ensured that the library contributed to meeting the school's priorities for improvement* (Ofsted 2006:1).

Zsiray (2003) suggests that the skills and elements that contribute to successful leadership of the school library media program transfer to being a school principal, both focusing on instructional improvement, school climate and collaboration. This can be connected to the finding made by the Indiana Study (Lance et al. 2007) that better performing schools tended to be ones whose principals placed a high value on librarians as leaders in the school community and partners in administration and curriculum design, and where the school staff acknowledge librarians as partners in learning and teaching.

This is borne out by the practical experience of librarians in UK schools. Anne Marie Tarter, winner of the UK School Librarian of the Year award 2006, successfully argued for Head of Department status in Ripon Grammar School, a position which gave her the opportunity to be directly involved in curriculum planning with teaching colleagues and made her part of the school management team. The librarians of Abingdon School and St Helen's & St Katherine's School have close involvement in school strategy, which is reflected in the high priority those schools put on student use of the library and the funding allocated to the libraries to create and buy resources which tie into teaching for high academic achievement. Karen Morgan, Librarian at North London Collegiate School, has noted that holding Head of Department status puts her on an equal basis with subject leaders in her school and automatically involves her in management meetings, as well as reporting directly to the Deputy Headteacher for Curriculum

(Morgan, 2011). This level of library involvement with school management is vital for allowing the library to be part of the school planning at a strategic level and to be able to work alongside teachers in developing the collection and engaging students in skills.

This contrasts with the experiences of the Qatari librarians interviewed and those that answered the questionnaire. Interestingly, under the Ministry of Education system public schools were supposed to have a Library Committee bringing together representatives of the school staff and the librarian and taking responsibility for overall strategic planning. This committee was supposed to meet regularly to consider resource needs and use of the library in teaching. The survey of public librarians showed that despite this requirement, library committee meetings were erratic and infrequent, and representation of staff and librarian was inconsistent. Although more than half the schools did achieve a meeting at least once a year, 45% were not meeting at all. It is doubtful whether a single, annual meeting (the pattern of a third of the schools) is sufficient to achieve a properly strategic integration of the library into a school's policy framework and curriculum planning. It is also debatable whether 'annual' truly meets the expectation of 'regular' meetings.

Meetings per year	%
More than 3 meetings per year	0.2
3 meetings per year	7.4
Twice a year	12.8
Once a year	34.6
Never meets	45
Total %	100

**Figure 6.16:** Meeting of the school library High Committee

Primary schools showed the greatest commitment to regular meeting, with 79% meeting at least twice a year, and 43% meeting at least four times a year. It is possible that this is connected to a greater interest amongst the school management and teaching body in the benefit of the library towards students' reading development in the primary phase of education. It is also possible that this is connected to a greater proportion of primary school librarians being female graduates of the University of Qatar School of Information Library Science and therefore more rooted in the Ministry of Education system at the time of the survey in 2004.

This experience is similar to difficulties that Gildersleaves (2003, Discussion at supervision session) found while working as a School Libraries Advisor in Essex secondary schools which had no professional librarians in the 1980s. Whilst these schools in theory valued their learning resource centres and tended to have a library management committee, senior management rarely engaged with the library and made very inefficient use of the resources. In these schools, professional responsibility for the library tended to be given to a member of the teaching staff, often within the English department. As a result there was no whole-school strategy or view across all the curriculum areas of what learning resource centre could do for the school's priorities, because teachers tended to see it as being part of the English department rather than a whole school learning resource. As a first step, Gildersleaves found that by scheduling one Senior Management Team meeting a year in the library, she was able to get learning resource strategy on the agenda. However this was not a longer term substitute for inclusion of the learning resource centre manager in regular school management planning. Gildersleaves also used the UK system of INSET days – five days set aside in the annual school calendar to be used for staff training and service planning – to run events in school libraries with all teaching staff, on making better use of the learning resource centre. Twenty years later, in her research into school library evaluation, Gildersleaves (2006) found that a number of school librarians, often without professional qualifications and certainly without head of department status in their schools, were still not actively involved with teaching colleagues at the strategic level in whole-school literacy or information literacy planning.

The Qatari librarians surveyed and interviewed, from both public and independent schools, did not identify wider school management involvement or understanding of their role which appeared to be directly related to the administration of the school library itself. This is despite the statutory provision in the School Libraries Act 1992 for a library management committee in public schools, and the Good Practice Guide (QSEC, 2009) advice for independent school learning resource centers, and is a matter of concern. This suggests that if librarians are not formally part of the school's management team, and working closely with the school Principal, it is too easy for library contribution to learning and for the learning resource centre to drop out of the strategic priorities of school administration, even when documented guidance exists. Where student performance and highly trained staff are valued by schools, not

appreciating or ignoring the potential contribution of school library staff is a poor use of a school's resources, and an area that needs to be looked at closely.

An indication of the areas that schools need to consider is provided in the *Improve your Library* self-evaluation framework section looking at what to assess for library management:

***7a: Leadership and management of the LRC and learning resources):***

- i. *Does the work of the LRC reflect the explicit aims and values of the school and contribute towards school improvement?*
- ii. *How supportive are the links between the head teacher/SMT/ governing body and the LRC?*
- iii. *Is the LRC manager able to contribute effectively to the overall management of the school?*
- iv. *Does the LRC manager have clarity of vision and purpose?*
- v. *Are there opportunities for staff and pupil input into the development of the LRC?*
- vi. *Is the LRC manager able to contribute effectively to the selection and management of learning resources throughout the school?*
- vii. *Does sound financial management of the LRC's delegated budget allow the LRC to achieve its priorities?*

(DfES 2004a:27).

It is important that the first three aspects for quality assessment are directly about the strategic relationship of the library and school management, and that the fourth implies a close involvement of the librarian with school goals and how these are carried through into the learning resource centre goals. The support notes for Strand 7a suggest mapping the extent of where the library is included in school development plans and policy documents and how the library's vision and policies reflect these school plans. It is also suggested that the librarian is a member of school management and curriculum development teams. The notes identify practical ways of supporting this close relationship, using evidence from policy documents, management meetings and consultation with teaching and management staff about their perceptions on the role of the library. It is also important that points vi and vii identify a clear link between overall management and the librarian's role in collection development and budgeting (DfES 2004b:81).

## 6.9 Collection Management

If we look back to the primary purposes of a school library, as discussed earlier, these were identified as encouragement of literacy and reading enthusiasm, development of independent research skills and promotion of cultural awareness at the local and global levels. All of these goals have a close relationship with learning resources and have implications for what should constitute the collection, its quality and its appropriateness for students within the school. It is the collection that draws the school community into the library, and ensures whether they choose to make use of it to support their learning or leisure, and supports reader development in its widest sense. However, in an information world relying increasingly on digital sources and communication, it is essential to consider the relationship between print and electronic resources, and how far it makes sense to have a physical library collection if students can have the material they need in a digital library.

Four key themes emerge from the literature:

- i. The nature of the collection: from policy to collection (Tilke 2002; Twist et al. 2007; Kovacs and Elkordy, 2000; IFLA/UNESCO School library guidelines 2002).
- ii. The role of the school librarian in creating and managing the collection (Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock, 2001; Bellingham Public Schools 2004; Barrett and Douglas, 2004; DfES 2004c; AASL 2009).
- iii. The importance of the collection in supporting student learning (IFLA/UNESCO 2002; Tilke 2002; Kirkland 2010; AASL 2001; White and Stone 2010).
- iv. The way in which the collection shapes students' and teachers' perceptions and use of the school library.

Ball, discussing collection development in universities (Ball, 2012 in Fieldhouse and Marshall 2012), makes a further point that libraries are becoming much less about collecting in resources and more about new ways of disseminating the academic output

of the university. Clearly there is a big difference between schools focused on teaching and learning and universities combining research with teaching. However, Ball's point is useful because it identifies that learning institutions in the digital age are also creative institutions and that what is created is an important part of the wider digital resource. School libraries could therefore also become repositories of students' own creative work and share this creativity. Valenza notes this point in her Manifesto, saying that the 21<sup>st</sup> century school librarian thinks of "web presence as a knowledge management tool for your entire school. It includes student-produced instruction and archived (celebrated) student work" (Valenza, 2010). She goes on to emphasize that "communication is the end-product of research" and that the school librarian should be encouraging students to be using the library both for creation of work but also for sharing and publishing it.

#### i. The nature of the collection- from policy to collection

The school collection is guided by two important aspects: a clear understanding of the population of library users, and their access level defined by the intellectual skills and knowledge needed by the users to access the collection. It is essential therefore to have a deep knowledge of the users and their abilities to guide the collection in terms of ensuring that the curriculum, interest and reading range of users' requirements are met. A collection needs to stimulate and stretch individuals' intellectual abilities and imagination through the materials that are on offer in the library (Tilke 2002).

A print-based definition of collection may be seen in terms of books or other library materials including manuscripts, pamphlets, art, photographs, maps and newspapers. To this IFLA (2002:11) add music, computer games and magazines, and Douglas et al (2002:10) include audio visual materials such as cds and dvds, focused CD-ROM titles and web based learning packages. Kovacs and Elkordy discuss the contribution of electronic resources to the school collection, noting the addition of electronic resources such as computerized bibliographic databases, full text databases, e-journal articles, e-books and reports and multimedia (Kovacs and Elkordy, 2000). The library may buy electronic resources, such as e-book downloads, or increasingly they buy licensed access to electronic collections maintained by external suppliers, such as e-journal providers. In addition, there is a vast amount of information freely available on the internet, and through social media. Thus the 21<sup>st</sup> century school library is as much concerned with enabling effective access to digital resources and appropriate creativity

as it is with actual provision of materials, which links directly back into the librarian as developer of information literacy.

The IFLA/UNESCO school library guidelines (2004), state that the school library should have a collection that reflects the needs and interests of users. The advice given is that the school administration, teachers and librarians should work together to draw up a collection policy and that the policy statement of the collection should include the IFLA/UNESCO library manifesto, a statement of intellectual freedom, a statement of freedom of information, long and short term objectives and the purpose of the collection in relation to school and curriculum. Although these points were not disputed by authorities in the Ministry of Education and Supreme Education Council, and by the librarians interviewed in Qatar, the lack of recognized national guidelines or policy giving guidance as to the creation and monitoring of collections has resulted in ‘ad hoc’ practices which were carried out or set up solely in response to a specific situation or problem, largely without considering wider or longer-term issues. The problems identified earlier on collaborative strategic planning present challenges for the collective management, teacher and librarian development of policy overall and collection development specifically.

The collection recommendation given by CILIP (Barrett and Douglas, 2004) is that school libraries should aim to stock 13 items (to include both paper and digital resources) per student in the 11-16 age range, with an approximate 17 items for post-16 students. The recommended ratio of fiction to non-fiction is 1:4, or 1:5 depending on the priorities of the school library. The rationale for these figures is based on the number of subjects studied within the curriculum, the need to provide enough resources to support all students and their particular needs per subject, and to provide a varied balance of materials and viewpoints. Although students at the senior phase of education may be studying fewer subjects, they will need greater breadth and depth of subject coverage and to make more use of scholarly materials in preparation for studying beyond school.

The size of the collection is one factor but its relevance and interest to the reader is another. Twist *et al* (2007) stress the importance of interesting titles in an accessible form as being essential in countering the decline in reading as a consequence of the time

and interest in video and computer games. As electronic resources have become an important part of any library (or ‘media learning resource centre’) the collection and the way it is accessed play an important part in assisting learners to use information literacy skills, for example to search and retrieve information on the Internet, to use electronic databases and books and so widen the students’ access to information beyond the paper based collection held by the school.

#### ii. The role of the school librarian in creating and managing the collection

The school librarian plays a central role in collection building relying on a close collaboration between teachers, students and the other members of the school community to inform decisions about the nature of the collection. The collection is underpinned by a philosophy of the purpose of the library and an understanding of how the collection will support the values of the school, student learning, the curriculum, literacy and teaching policy (Tilke 2000) and is based on a partnership for learning according to the Information Powered School (Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock 2001).

This would enable the librarian to gain greater understanding in terms of recommending and providing relevant resources in the library to support specific needs, both of students and the adult school community (teachers and support staff). Student involvement in collection development is a key aspect of creating a collection that meets the needs and interests of its users and enables the library population to have a direct involvement in their school library. Students can be involved on several levels with collection development according to Farmer (2002:75) ranging from suggesting titles; reviewing books and sharing their opinions in discussions, writing testimonials, and online, to forming an advisory library board or book club which consults with the wider student population. Where the school librarian is able to work in partnership with the school community they are able to create a collection that meets the needs of its users. The AASL advise that

*With a broad view of the curriculum, extensive knowledge of both traditional and electronic resources, and commitment to serve the full range of students and other members of the learning community, the school library media specialist can direct the design and maintenance of current, comprehensive, high-quality collections*  
(AASL and AECT 1998:90).

The public school librarians surveyed in Qatar in contrast, reported that very few teachers had discussions with them to advise them about appropriate books or resources for the library; further, they were not consulted about the purchase of new books since all new books were bought centrally through the Committee of the Department of School Libraries (DSL). Librarians therefore were unable to support their school's curriculum positively by recommending suitable books, or, to comply with advice about collection mapping and development.

Taylor (2005) cites Harbour's advice about collection mapping which is defined as a form of assessment that enables one to determine the quality and the quantity of the materials available for the students at any time. He also cites Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock (2001) in that collection mapping is a process that is used to collect, present and organize information about the library media collection of resources. The CILIP Guidelines for Secondary School Libraries (Barrett and Douglas, 2004) recommend that librarians need to be involved in evaluating the continuous needs assessment and changing demands to available resources; The School Library Association guidelines recommend that librarians carry out an ongoing process of sampling and auditing the collection (Lemaire, 2001). The *Improve Your Library* toolkit Strand 4b asks school librarians to use the following questions as a means to evaluating the quality of the collection:

- i. *Are LRC spending decisions linked to priorities in the SIP and in School Policies?*
- ii. *Are resources adequate in terms of quantity, range, quality, relevance, currency, condition and cultural relevance?*
- iii. *Reading materials: does the LRC provide access to a plentiful supply of material catering for all levels of reading ability and interest?*
- iv. *Are resources regularly weeded and updated to meet the needs of pupils and staff? Are resources well organized to meet the needs of pupils and staff?*
- v. *Are resources well organized to meet the needs of pupils and staff?*
- vi. *Is effective use made of new technology?*
- vii. *Is effective use made of outside agencies?*
- viii. *Are LRC resources adequately promoted throughout the school?*

(DfES 2004:22).

Collection mapping also allows for future planning, acquisition and managing the budget, building in possibilities for curriculum changes and development.

In contrast, collection acquisition for schools in Qatar, both during the period in which the public school library questionnaires were administered (2005) and currently, is restricted both in the way the collection is acquired and the influence that the school librarian has in managing and developing it.

Collection acquisition in Qatar takes place through two channels:

- The Committee of the Department of School Libraries (DSL) (Ministry of Education) consisting of subject inspectors from the various departments who provide advice. The committee is headed by the Under Secretary for Cultural Affairs within the Ministry of Education, with the Head of the DSL as leader of the steering committee. This body's recommendations result in a centralized system of collection acquisition supplying all schools within its area of responsibility. The selection of the collection is influenced by publishers bidding for contracts and by publishers with contacts and good marketing skills who are able to influence the decisions of those at the Ministry responsible for choosing the books intended for school libraries in Qatar. More recently, however, the Ministry of Education has started buying from book fairs and exhibitions rather than buying directly from authors. Although the librarians of school libraries at the grassroots level should be involved in the actual process of selecting the materials, within the experience of the author of this research, there has been no consultation between librarians, teachers, principals or administrators at the school levels or at the level of the Ministry of Education.
- Independent schools selecting their own collection. Where schools are designated 'Independent Schools' by the Education Institute within the Higher Education Council set up in 2002, they have the authority to manage their own resources including the selection of library resources and collection. Independent school librarians interviewed acknowledged that the library was an important support to the curriculum, providing resources that supported learning, and reported two key ways in which decisions were made about the selection of the collection: having a library committee which met between two and three times a year; or, individual subjects sending through requests for collection to the librarian at the start of the school year.

### iii. Collection supporting learning

The authorities in the Ministry of Education interviewed in Qatar, acknowledged that change and improvement in terms of facilities and collection had taken place, and that the quality of the collection was important. The Director of the Education Institute of the Supreme Council of Education when interviewed, was clear about the role of libraries in supporting learning stating,

*'The purpose and mission of the school library in independent schools is very important as it is an integral part of productive creative and resourceful learners'* (Interview with DIOE, 2007)

Although she stated that it was essential for schools to allocate a space for a library resource centre, she observed that according to the new educational system, the decision was left to the school administration, parents and board of governors to decide about the specifications and details of that specific school library which included both the physical layout of the library and what it contained. Decisions about the collection then were the responsibility of the school administration.

The Head of the Department for National Curriculum observed that,

*The school library is becoming an important tool of education, self-development and learning. However, because of the fact that the school library only started to operate in Qatari schools in the last few decades, both students and teachers need time to understand how vital the role of school libraries is to learning*

(Interview with HDNC, 2005)

It is important to note that public school librarians who responded to the questionnaire requested that they should be given more involvement in the selection of resources and collections for their school libraries. Their comments showed that they were aware of good practice, although they were not in a position to do anything about their current collection and its selection:

Librarians from KBAISB stated

*"School libraries' collections should be relevant to the type of school, student academic level, age and school community needs"*

(Questionnaire response, KBAISB, 2004)

Other librarians suggested that there should be modernization in curriculum

*"Curriculum should change and school library should be given leading role in this process"* (Questionnaire response, AIS. 2004)

Independent school librarians often faced similar problems in collection management.

*One of the big differences from the old system is that each subject has a coordinator responsible for buying books. They discuss which books are needed in relation to the curriculum and are able to choose from the books on offer from the book fair directory*

(Interview with librarian, AYIS, 2007)

*Students are not involved in selecting of books; decisions about common reference books are made by the librarian themselves; any other decisions about the collection are made in consultation with subject staff*

(Interview with librarian, OIAKIS, 2007)

*Unfortunately our budget does not match the students' ages, most of the collection is about the Arabic language and religion which doesn't meet the needs of the school curriculum* (Interview with librarian, AWIS, 2007)

#### iv.. How the collection shapes the users' perception and use

The Minister of Education stated that one of the main obstacles which needed to be addressed, in his view was,

*A lack of motivation on the part of students to use the library and the conventional perception of the school library as being 'a storage of books', have impeded the efficiency of the school libraries*

(Interview with ME, 2005)

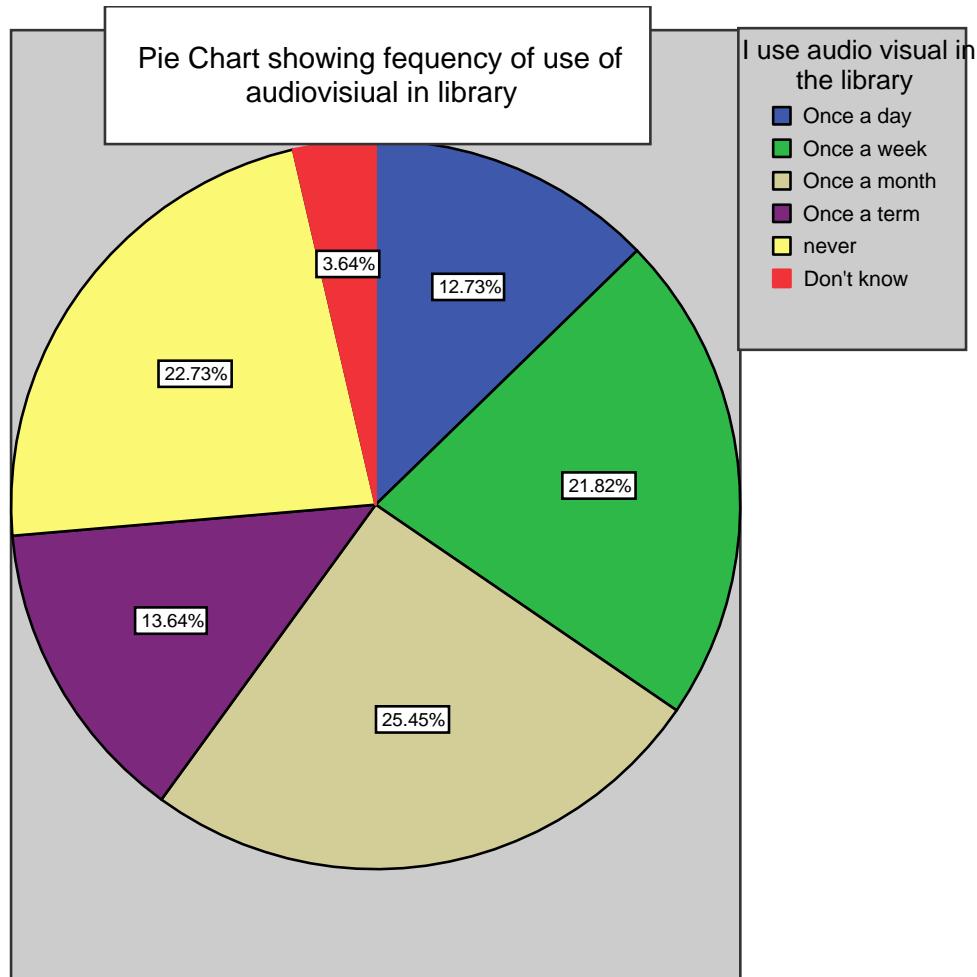
To establish whether the Minister's view was accurate, the school librarian survey was examined. The survey was carried out in order to examine the perceptions of the public school librarians as to whether they felt that the collections held within their school libraries were seen as being of relevance to the needs of the students in supporting their learning.

Figure 6.17 below shows the differences between the primary, intermediate, secondary, combined and model schools within the responsibility of the Ministry of Education where books are acquired and allocated to schools through a centralized system of collection acquisition.

Type of school	Collection is relevant to the needs of the students	Collection is not relevant to the needs of the students	Don't know	Total
Primary <i>Total no. 91</i>	67.35%	0.0%	32.65%	100%
Intermediate <i>Total no. 22</i>	9.18%	0.0%	90.82%	100%
Secondary <i>Total no. 14</i>	10.20%	1.2%	88.60%	100%
Combined <i>Total no. 5</i>	4.08%	0.0%	95.92%	100%
Model <i>Total no. 15</i>	8.16%	0.0%	91.84%	100%
Total no. of schools: 147	98.97%	1.20%		

**Figure 6.17:** Qatari public school librarians' perceptions of relevance of collection

Figure 6.17 shows that although 67.35% of primary school librarians reported the collection held was relevant to the needs of their students, the majority of librarians in intermediate, secondary, combined and model schools were unable to comment on the relevance of the collections held in this respect. An examination of the school libraries within this study by the author in his former role as Head of the School Libraries Department, supports this view, and indicates a lack of communication between librarians and teachers responsible for subjects and a concern that the Minister's view was accurate especially since university libraries are acknowledged to play a central role to students' higher learning and future achievement.



**Figure 6.18:** Frequency of use of audiovisual resources

Fig 6.18 identifies the frequency of use of the audiovisual resources across all school libraries in Qatar in 2005. The percentages range from 'never' (22.73%), to 'once a month' (25.45%) and although this is clearly of concern and demonstrates the underuse of existing library resources, 21.82% of students reported using these facilities once a week with only 3.64% of students claimed to have no knowledge of the existence of such a facility.

The data from the student survey in Qatar highlighted confusion about the role of the library. This was reflected in the views of the 110 students surveyed from six schools representing single sex schools at different levels of public education: primary (20 girls': 20 boys'), intermediate (18 girls': 12 boys') and secondary (23 girls': 17 boys'). The students reported a range of conflicting views about the way in which the library could be used with very little comment about the quality of the collection being used to

support their learning. Although some students saw it as a place for quiet and study, others saw it as a social venue. Some students (13.62%) viewed the library as a quiet place, while others (13.57%) viewed it a good place to have lunch, or a good place to meet with friends (9.02%). Some students reported the school library had enough novels and leisure resources (9.26%) and was as pleasant place to study (10.32%), only 9.84% of students reported that they thought that the school library looked boring. The students clearly have mixed views about the library, they see it as a social space rather than a place which supports and extends their learning and where study takes place. Clearly the library has a low profile within the six schools as far as the students are concerned, and if the school librarians were asked to justify the role of the school library and its contribution to learning based on these data, they would find it difficult.

## **Discussion**

An issue that emerges from here is that the school library is not perceived as a serious resource and that the collection itself is not seen by the students as being the most important part of the school library, an aspect not helped by the lack of communication and partnership between subject teachers and librarians in ensuring that the collection supports the curriculum and students' learning. Further, with the use of computer Tablets being trialed in schools, there is a potential risk that students in carrying their 'library access' with them, will have a distorted view of a school library shaped by e-books, electronic resources and newspapers, references and research searches through Google, and not see the ability of the school library physical collection to develop their extended reading and learning, literacy, curiosity and imagination.

It should be recognized that the experience that young students have of their school library and its collection may have a negative impact on the way they see and understand libraries in general as they progress to higher education. This point was highlighted by the university librarians interviewed in this study, who identified poor library skills as an area of concern.

## **6.10 ICT and the school library**

An important aspect of the library is the extension of the collection to include information technology and the Internet, serving both to draw students into the library and extend the resources available to them and support independent research and learning. ICT in schools and libraries has become increasingly important among many teachers and education specialists who have advocated the benefit of using positive aspects of ICT in the learning process in general, and in supporting and improving learning skills in particular.

Five themes emerge from the literature:

- i. ICT is an integral part of a school library that defines itself as a learning resource centre: The availability of ICT including the Internet, electronic databases, electronic resources is central to school library provision especially where the library defines itself as a ‘learning resource centre’ (Dubber 2002; Tilke 2002; Kirkland 2010; Valenza 2010; Pavey 2011).
- ii. ICT as a tool for learning: The technology itself is a tool for accomplishing complex tasks and fulfilling clear curriculum objectives and offering the potential to support students and staff with learning difficulties or disabilities (AASL 2003; DfES 2004b; Ofsted 2006);
- iii. The role of the school library in developing e-skills: The school library is central to enabling students to developing the skill-set necessary for confident use of the Internet in supporting research and learning (Clyde 1997; AASL 2003; Shenton 2009; Pinto et al. 2010); supporting the ‘Google generation’ (Rowlands 2008);
- iv. Internet safety and awareness is an important aspect of school library ICT provision. Safety software and safety guidance taught to students are essential aspects of safe ICT use (AASL and AECT 1998; Aftab 1998 [in Arabic]; Barrett and Douglas 2004; Bartlett and Miller 2011);

In addition to the four themes above which focus on supporting the learner and learning, the fifth element relates to the school librarian, specifically to electronic school library management systems:

v. School library management systems: These support the role and work of the school librarian including aspects such as cataloguing, networking, evaluation, budget and collection management (Tilke 2002; DfES 2004b; Adams 2007; Adams and Lemaire 2011).

The Internet Manifesto Guidelines (IFLA/UNESCO 2006:25) notes that Article 19 of the Universal Declaration 'is of great relevance to the international library community as it states that access to information should be allowed regardless of media or frontiers. The logical consequence of this is that library users have the right to freedom of access to information via the Internet'. This can now be extended (in the 21<sup>st</sup> century) to include opportunities for students and staff to access a wide range of digitally based resources.

The Internet is used more than any other source of information by students, often because of their lack of skills in using the library's available resources. Some students find it difficult to use their library skills and therefore may opt for easier options. The librarian has a very important role to play here, namely teaching students the skills relevant to using the Internet successfully and safely to access library resources, search engines and navigating the worldwide web, tele-collaborative activities on the Net (AASL and AECT, 1998:149).

The case of Qatar is particularly interesting with respect to the use of ICT because it provides an example of rapid development over the past ten years. The national survey of schools carried out in 2004 as a part of this research, revealed that ICT was not a priority for librarians or schools. Of the 150 questionnaires returned, 80% of school librarians reported use of a single computer in the library intended for administrative purposes only.

Al-Emadi's research on public school librarians in Qatar found that,

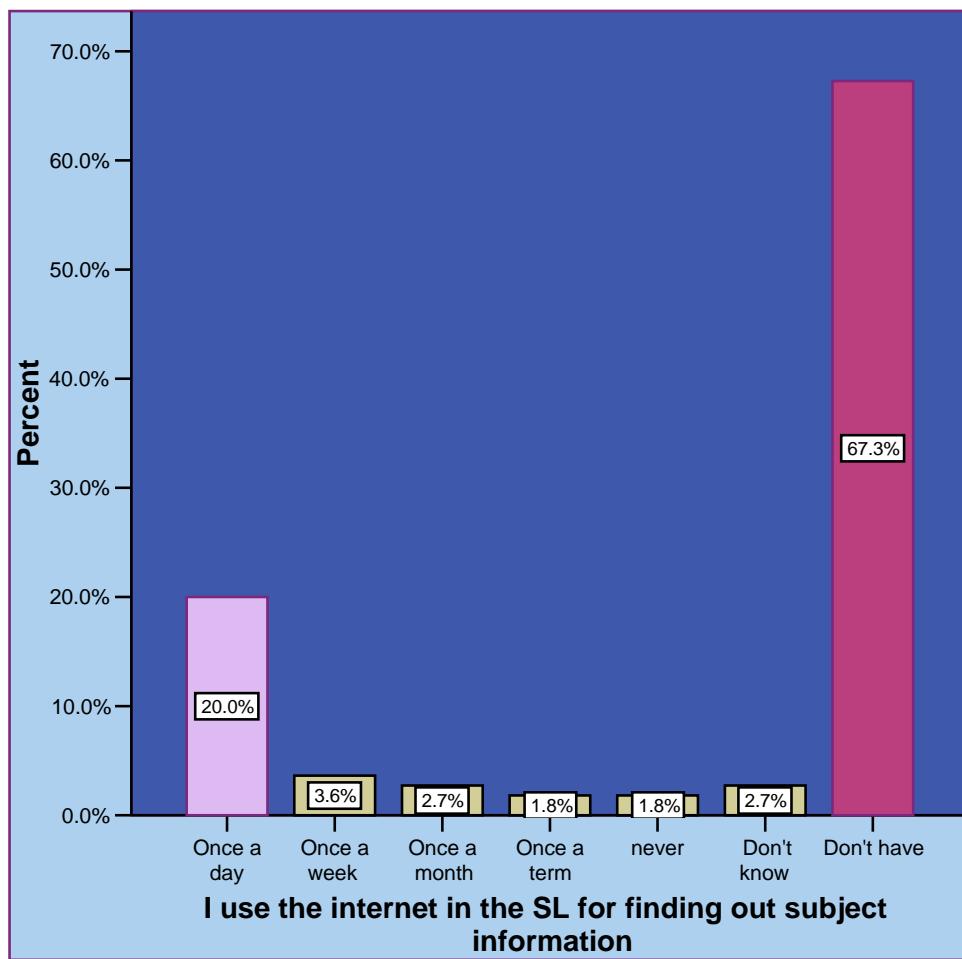
*95.7% reported that students do not have access to instructional software either in the school libraries or through a network connected to classrooms. Ninety-seven percent of librarians reported that student do not have access to CD-ROMS, multimedia stations and the Internet. Teachers also do not have access to on-line databases, e-mail or the Internet (Al-Emadi, 1998:55).*

The 2004 survey of students' use of on-line databases (Figure 6.19) showed for example, poor IT access and use, with access varying from once a day (8.8%) to never (17.5%). The greatest number of public school students claimed to use on-line databases only once a month or once a term to support their learning.

Occurrence	Frequency	Percentage
Once a day	10	8.8%
Once a week	18	15.8%
Once a month	31	27.2%
Once a term	25	21.9%
Never	20	17.5%
Don't know	6	5.3%
Missing	4	3.5%
Total	114	100

**Figure 6.19:** Use of on-line databases by students in the school library

Figure 6.20 below shows the response of students to the use of the internet in searching out subject information. It shows that (67.3%) of students involved, do not have access to the internet in their school libraries.



**Figure 6.20:** Use of the internet in public school libraries for finding subject information

A comment by one of the independent school librarians interviewed may shed light on the results of students' internet use. His view was that the poor computing facilities and lack of internet access in the library meant that students were reluctant to use the library for study and research:

*The lack of ICT and internet provision in the library affects the number of students coming in to use the school library*  
 (Interview with librarian, AWIS, 2007)

Due to the speed of technological change, it is useful to separate the view and experiences that came through the interviews with the school librarians in the new independent schools in 2007 and the views of the Supreme Education Council in their document on e-education (QSEC 2011). The following were typical of the Qatari independent school librarians' responses:

*The Institute of Education has provided a range of equipment for us including computers but unfortunately we don't have networking system in the library. We have lots of computers and we will be approaching a company to help network the library with the funding that the Institute of Education has promised us from the next budget. We appreciate that this system is very expensive and we hope that the money will be found for us* (AYIS, 2007)

*The lack of ICT and internet provision in the library affects the number of students coming in to use the school library* (AWIS, 2007)

The national public school survey carried out in 2004 as part of this research showed that librarians felt that students rarely used the library internet in school and certainly did not see it as an educational resource. The highest frequencies reported by the librarians surveyed were as follows: 9.1% of students used the internet once a day to play games, 6.1% used the internet once a term for chatting and 10.9% used the internet once a term and 8.8% once a day for checking e-mails.

The survey of 2004 revealed that 67.3% of public school libraries did not have access to the internet, and as a consequence, students were not able to use this important resource to support their learning when researching subject information. The school librarians reported that on average less than 7% of students (5.65% of primary; 7% of middle schools and 6.72% of secondary schools) used the internet to find out subject information. A difference was shown overall, with 8.15% of boys using the internet in the public school library to access subject information as compared to 11.19% of girls, based on the level of use identified by librarians of girls' and boys' schools.

It is interesting to note parents' views, four years later, as to internet usage by their children. Of those surveyed, 39% (25) of parents stated that their child could use the internet in the school library, although 23.4% (15) stated that their child did not use the internet in the school library to help them with their homework at school. By contrast 82.8% (53) stated that their child used the Internet at home.

Although the data gathered from the national survey (2004) demonstrated the poor level of what might be termed 'e-confident learners', it should be seen in context in that it is only in the past ten or so years that the internet, mobile phone access and use in Qatar have grown to such an extent that in 2013 that the majority of adults and children

have mobile phones and access to the internet. The digital skills of those surveyed in 2004 (who are now young adults in their 20s and 30s) cannot be compared with the digital skills of students currently in the school system. Nevertheless the concern is that school library internet access and resources are used to a lesser extent than home or personal internet when carrying out research (Observation based on discussions by author with students at secondary schools). It is possible that this digital divide evident in the survey and observation feedback between the school students of 2004 and today's students, may also reflect on into a lack of confidence in the 2004 group using e-technologies for study and information use as a life skill rather than as a social tool in adulthood.

The interviews carried out with the policy makers in the Ministry of Education in Qatar in 2005 were encouraging, acknowledging the need for libraries to adapt to the new information technology. The Minister of Education commented,

*the modern school library is moving towards becoming a resource centre rather than a mere library. Therefore, school libraries in Qatar are moving towards introducing new technology in order to serve the purpose of having integrated resource centers as well as introducing the Internet and on-line services*

(Interview with ME, 2005)

The Director of the Department of School Libraries reinforced this, saying

*any modern school library should serve as a modern resource centre. Therefore, the Qatari school libraries should be encouraged to introduce IT to the list of their offered services*

(Interview with DDSL, 2005)

All five policy makers from the Ministry of Education agreed that IT in school libraries was a necessity for any modern school library. They believed that school libraries should serve as modern resource centers and as such the Qatari school libraries should be encouraged to introduce IT to their list of services. They also agreed that the Qatari school libraries should be equipped with the latest facilities in order to allow students and teaching staff to receive information by using the information technology.

Their view was that the modern school library was moving towards becoming a resource centre rather than a ‘mere library’ and that school libraries in Qatar in moving towards introducing new technology (internet and on-line services), would become integrated resource centers. There were also ambitious plans in place to integrate IT into the curriculum and learning process, but these objectives were yet to be achieved because of insufficient resources. In effect the opportunity to push ahead with these plans was being held up by the transition at this time in 2005 from Ministry of Education to Supreme Council of Education control.

The survey completed by 110 students in 2006 comprised a convenience sample whereby the survey questionnaire was made available in participating school libraries over five working days in March. School inspectors conducting visits in the week of distribution took 10 copies of the survey into each of 13 schools visited and placed these in the school library. The school librarian drew attention to the questionnaire to encourage students to complete anonymously and place in a sealed box for collection by the researcher. The survey explored the views and impressions of boys and girls in the primary, middle and secondary phases of education in Qatar. The aim was to explore their use of the school library in relation to the use of technology in the school library. Questions were asked specifically as to their use of audio-visual resources and the internet.

This survey showed that 69.09% of the students who responded reported a lack of internet facilities within their school library and accordingly students were not able to communicate via e-mails. The remainder (33.6%) students reported that their school libraries were equipped with internet facilities and in these cases more than 9.0% of students involved have either used the internet once a term or once a day to check their e-mails. Additionally, 9.09% of all students reported that they had never used the internet in the school library to check their e-mails. Additionally since their school libraries lacked internet facilities within the school library students reported that they were not able to use the internet to play games. In the 30.1% of schools who had internet facilities, more than 7.0% of students reported either use of the internet once a week, while 9.09% reported use of the internet once a day to play games. Only 3.64% of respondents said that they used the internet rarely each academic term or month to play games, while 5.45% reported that they did not know that such a facility existed.

Scott notes that appropriate training and support is important in order to

*Ensure purposeful and productive use of the Internet as a resource to support pupils and staff*  
(Scott 1996:4).

The internet has contributed to education in such a way that it has become essential for each school to have access to this essential tool. It has revolutionized education and offered more options to teachers, school librarians and students. However, there is still a debate on the boundaries and limits as well as the information available on the web.

Use of the internet is set in the context of Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948). It gives a common framework for the establishment, protection and enforcement of human rights. The concept of freedom of access to information and freedom of expression is clearly outlined in Article 19 of the Declaration of Human Rights:

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. (UN 1948 – website)*

Barrett and Douglas, in considering the use of internet in secondary schools within the CILIP Guidelines for Secondary Schools, provide some suggestions for using the Internet to extend awareness of the library and to support student development as readers as well as effective information users. They note,

*'librarians can make an important contribution to the development of the schools' internet and website. The internet should be a marketing tool for library services, activities and resources, as well as an information tool*  
(Barrett and Douglas 2004:18).

In spite of the significance of using the Internet as an essential tool of education, it is also necessary to supervise, guide and direct young learners to appropriate as well as useful websites. Aftab suggest that 'safety software' should be used as a measure to protect children from being exposed to material that parents and teachers do not wish them to access, acknowledging that,

*Safety software can also help in controlling and monitor where children go on line and therefore it gives parents, teachers and librarians... Protective measures include, filtering software, blocking software and monitoring time spent on line [Aftab, Accessed 20/7/2011].*

Pavey (2011:40) advises that schools have an ‘Acceptable Use Policy’ (AUP) which forms a contract for pupils’ use of ICT which covers all aspects of internet safety and internet codes of behavior and which school librarians support and promote and importantly are directly involved in working with others in their school to draw up.

The power of ICT and the internet has been acknowledged by The Supreme Council in the education guidance published in 2011 (QSEC 2011). It states that the national funded education targets require that ICT is built into and used across all curriculum subjects; that school libraries are expected to support the development of information literacy and support the curriculum; and that the use of new technologies will support students’ access of the curriculum, their progress and assessment and will be available to parents to access their child’s progress. This shows the rapid pace of change around the exploitation of the digital environment in schools. In addition this is the first government indication of the importance of the school library as a key player in e-learning.



**Figure 6.21:** Secondary Boys’ school: Developing ICT skills in the learning resource centre

The e-Education model that has been developed by the Supreme Council is an integrated system that includes a tablet for each child, a Learning Management System,

an E-Library (electronic library), E-Content and web registration. The Learning Management System is of particular interest in that it is intended for three groups of users: Schools, Students and Parents.

The school strand includes e-lessons, continuous tasks and assessments, educational resources, teacher timetables, school email and a student progress and monitoring system.

The student strand includes student email, student timetable, portfolio of work, continuous tasks and assessments, educational resources including e-books and E-Content (which contains the curriculum subjects including English, Arabic, science, mathematics and Islamic studies, and is aligned with the Qatari standards and classified by stage, grade and subjects).

The parent strand allows parents to access and track their children's performance via their blackberry or i-phone.

The E-Library allows the exchange of information and content between school libraries and the Central Library within the Supreme Council; provides e-Content of numerous books, magazines as well as literary and scientific periodicals in a range of formats including visual and audio; allows the tracking of borrowing transactions from the library; supports the gathering of data relating to reading, allowing school staff to monitor and promote reading and carry out research; provides subscriptions to international libraries allowing the access of resources to support the learning and development of students and teachers. When interviewed, the Director of the Institute of Education reported that the Supreme Education Council has partnered with The Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology (ictQATAR) to create a technology-based framework to enhance e-learning (2011). Twelve schools have participated in KnowledgeNet, using Microsoft Learning Gateway and Blackboard. Tablet PCs (portable computers) are being trialed in one school with 200 seventh grade students as part of the 'e-schoolbag project'. The aim is that with this freedom to foster learning in young people, schools will encourage students to become independent learners to use and apply resources beyond the classroom.

However, there are potential issues for the school library itself. It is acknowledged that although the school library resources can be accessed through the Tablet and in this way successfully support student learning, the danger is that the Tablet will be seen by students as a ‘quick fix’ or a ‘one stop shop’ through which they will access their learning needs. They will not see a role for the school library with its collection and wide range of resources, or the skills, support and guidance that can be offered by the school librarian in extending and developing their individual learning, reading interests, literacy and information literacy skills.

Government reports chart the change in attitude to ICT and e-learning, acknowledging the impact of global developments on young people within the wider agenda of ‘developments and challenges in the 21st. Century’ and the informatics revolution:

*The remarkable qualitative and quantitative changes that have occurred to information processing tools as in the case of computer technologies, communication and in the amazingly reduced span of time in data storage and retrieval* (QMoE 2004:38).

The current Qatar National Development Strategy (2011-2016) makes a very clear statement about the importance of ICT to education and its investment in schools ensuring that all students (from Kindergarten – year 12) have ready access to a computer in schools, reporting the increased number of computers in school and that:

*Information and communication technology (ICT) is a key enabler of successful education and training. Mastery of technology is required to participate in and contribute to the knowledge economy. Using ICT in teaching can improve learning outcomes and increase effectiveness in administrative functions* (QGSDP 2011:130).

The target the government has set is to develop and implement an ICT strategy in all education sectors based on international ICT best practices to improve management, administrative processes, learning environments, teaching methods and education outcomes (QGSDP 2011:131).

Recent school observations (in the period 2010-11) and informal discussions with students as part of the field research for the study, revealed that they owned

BlackBerrys, i-phones and Tablets and that they saw themselves as confident Internet users. These views contrast with the experiences of the students that took part in the author's national student survey of 2004, showing how far students who are now described as the 'Google generation' have come. Whilst for the students today ICT, the internet and smartphones are a natural part of life, at the same time the school librarians and teachers have to cope with a significant change in the 10-year period of technological transition covered by this research. This has implications for how librarians and teachers are trained and supported in choosing, using and getting the best learning value out of ICT resources.

## **6.11 Library management systems**

The range of school Management systems has been discussed in Chapter Two and include e.g. Atrium School Library Software (USA); Adminstrator Plus (USA); Micro Librarian Systems and Softlink; Micro Librarian Systems (MLS, UK); Softlink (UK). They provide framework systems for managing the collection, evaluating provision and the budget.

School Library Management systems are central to the effective management of libraries and involve a range of technical systems that enable the library to operate successfully. These systems enable the library to manage its collection; the audit, evaluation and acquisition of resources over time; the lending and borrowing of resources by students and staff; on-line electronic databases and books; search and retrieval systems; training of users to search and use library resources; the ethical use of technology; printing and reprographics; networking of computer systems to include amongst other things links with other libraries and inter-library loans; ensuring appropriate software is in place to protect from computer viruses and to protect students (firewalls); monitoring student library usage and enabling Internet access and provides administrative support to the librarian. Use of these systems requires trained and skilled professional librarians (Tilke 2002; ALA 1998).

It is important to remember that the research with public libraries in Qatar was carried out during the period 2002-2005, and that school library management systems

availability and access was not as extensive as it is currently (2012). The librarians reported:

*We don't have a system yet, even though we have been in our school for 4 years- we are still waiting for the budget to cover our library ICT (OIAKIS, 2007)*

*There is no networking system or internet to help organize our resources, even though we have the computers- hopefully we will be given money from the IoE to help organize the library (DIS, 2007)*

When asked about the technical library management tasks carried out, six of the seven librarians interviewed reported that carrying out manual classification, searching and preparing information were major technical jobs which consumed their time, with the exception of one where a computer system and network existed. It is interesting to compare this to the current LMS by SEC (which it is acknowledged includes an e-library and a range of teacher support systems) and identify whether the new system actually covers the needs of the school librarian. This is an obvious area that needs addressing, identifying whether school librarians will have access a Library Management System that is part of the new integrated Learning Management System or whether school librarians will have a separate independent system.

The Director of the Institute of Education confirmed that it was very important to allocate a space within schools for a library resources centre. However, she observed that in accordance with the new educational system, the decision should be left to the school administration, parents and board of governors to decide the specifications and details of that school library. It is clear from this, if the decision is to be taken at a local level, that clear guidance is necessary for schools in terms of the roles and responsibility of the librarian, the extended role of the library and its contribution to the curriculum and students' literacy together with a clear mission statement for the school library.

All interviewees agreed that, during the last ten years, school libraries have witnessed major developments in terms of staffing, facilities and buildings. They agreed that IT in school libraries was a necessity for any modern school library. They believed that school libraries should serve as modern resource centers and as such all Qatari schools should be encouraged to introduce IT to their list of services offered within the library. They also agreed that Qatari school libraries should be equipped with the latest facilities

in order to allow students and teaching staff to receive, to access and exploit information by using information technology and to be part of a fully integrated print and online resource service. Visits to schools in 2010 revealed that government ICT targets were recognized by school librarians who saw these as ambitious, but as an opportunity for school libraries to play a more central role in supporting information literacy, the school curriculum and students' learning. Their key concern was one of resourcing and their lack of additional training needed to develop their own skills and to enable them to coach or advise both students and staff as the need arose in areas such as e-books, copyright, effective use of library management systems, licence contracts and internet safety.

## **Discussion**

The key issues arising from these rapid developments in ICT and government targets relate to resourcing, training implications of library staff and in monitoring and evaluation of the impact of ICT on the improvement of management; administrative processes; learning environments; teaching methods and education outcomes. Monitoring and evaluating the 'promise' of ICT is essential, to ensure that schools actually involve school libraries in supporting the curriculum and whether ICT can demonstrate a positive impact on student learning, especially with the rapid development of ICT and the Internet globally and issues related to Internet safety where schools as compared to the home, are better positioned to advise and educate students.

### **6.12 Funding and budgetary control**

Funding is central to the school library. It spans every aspect from the physical space and furnishing of the school library, through the collection, ICT and internet facilities and resources, to staffing and training. A well-equipped and resourced library which is run by trained librarians and which operates efficiently in supporting students' learning is dependent on funding that enables the library to articulate its mission, deliver its objectives effectively and expand its services to meet the needs of the students and school community that it serves. Dubber and Dring observe that

*We all recognize that the amount of money that a school invests in its library annually has always been a good indicator of the library's status within the school and its potential to support the curriculum and raise aspiration and achievement*

(Dubber and Dring 2012:3).

**The key theme that has emerged from the literature is that:**

- i. Funding is central to school libraries (IFLA/UNESCO 2002; Tilke 2002; Adams 2007; Creaser and Travis 2008; Dubber and Dring 2012).

The IFLA/UNESCO School Library Guidelines echo the UNESCO Manifesto (1999) which emphasizes the importance of funding to the role of the school library. The message is clear:

*the school library is essential to every long-term strategy for literacy, education, information provision and economic, social and cultural development. As the responsibility of local, regional and national authorities, it must be supported by specific legislation and policies. It must have adequate and sustained funding for trained staff, materials, technologies and facilities, and it shall be free of charge*

(IFLA/UNESCO 2002:7).

The literature also identifies a correlation between student achievement and school commitment to library budget (School Libraries Work! 2008). A key finding of the 2013 Australian school library survey noted

*There was a significant positive correlation between the annual school library budgets and NAPLAN Reading Literacy results* (Softlink 2013: 2)

The ability to deliver effective library provision that supports the learning and interests of students and staff such as that described in the literature is dependent on having an allocated budget that covers the collection; on-line resources; furniture; equipment and specialist activities. Tilke (2002:117) lists key reasons why having access to an annual budget is critical for the school library. These include enabling the library to plan for and maintain an up to date library collection; to manage curriculum change; to purchase newly published resources; to cater for students' special needs; and to build up a wide

range and variety in resources and collections. Markuson (1999:25 in Tilke 2002:118) makes an important request for a stable budget, stating "It is most important that a stable budget be built for the library programme", enabling long term planning and developments to take place. Markuson suggests that a stable budget is one where the amount allocated to the school library is set over a three year period and known to the librarian, rather than being unpredictable each year so that the librarian is unable to plan long term.

The Figure below (6.22) sets out Tilke's recommended model for collection provision and it is easy to see why schools under-spend on library collections, if we use this as a basis for estimating overall collection value and calculating how much investment is needed to sustain this.

Pupils in school	Collection size	Access to electronic resources	Items per pupil
300	7,880	110	26
700	13,944	195	20
1,100	18,189	254	16
1,500	21,318	298	14

**Figure 6.22:** Resourcing implications of the size of the collection (based on Tilke 2002)

The Ministry of Education officials interviewed in Qatar when asked about the public school library budget gave the following responses:

- *Funding is not sufficient* (US, 2005)
- *There is a greater need for increasing the funding allocated to school libraries due to the need of modernizing the libraries in order to cope with information technology* (ME, 2005)
- *The current rate of funding is sufficient. However, school libraries need more financial support in order to fund their future activities* (ACA, 2005)
- *Funding is sufficient* (DDSL, 2005)

This picture immediately shows some discrepancy of opinion and even some internal inconsistency. It is interesting that the interviewees here were all from within the Ministry of Education and commenting on what was still a largely centrally-run school

system where roughly 96% of school library funding came directly from the Ministry. What was evident was that responses from officials were supportive of school libraries in principle but were vague and lacking detail in relation to funding strategy. This was possibly a reflection of caution on the part of some interviewees, not wishing to appear critical of funding policy at the time, but it seemed to the author that the responses were more an indication of the level of understanding that individuals lacked detail in understanding the complexity and potential of a school library.

School librarians reported no experience of financial accountability. It is recognized that the librarian should be able to draw up a budget plan to show how the money will be spent and how it will contribute to the development of library services within the broader school development plan. The question then arises as to whether the school librarians have the skills for financial planning and managing the budget and if they do not, how they can receive the training to ensure that they have a professional approach to this aspect of school library management.

Responses from librarians in the public schools showed budget allocation could not be guaranteed each year. The remaining 4% of funding not centrally provided from the Ministry of Education was identified in the national survey of public school librarians as coming from donations from parents. The author's personal experience was that where cuts had to be made within the wider Ministry of Education budget, school library funding was the first area to be targeted. It is important to note that within the original public school system all schools had a similar allocated budget (with the secondary schools having an additional 10% compared to primary and middle schools (refer to Figures 6.23 and 6.24 for overall comparative library budgets). Although not large, the individual school library budget for the period of 2004-2005 was on average £1,615 which was allocated to schools for reading activities; book fairs etc and was in addition to centrally provided resources such as providing the collection; technical support; staff training and library furniture and equipment. The key point here is that public schools during this period had access to dedicated funding and support, even if the amount was not guaranteed.

In contrast school libraries within the new independent school system are dependent on funding allocated from within the school by their school principal and based on school

identified priorities. Where the library is seen as a central resource to the school, funding may be made a priority, but where decisions are made supporting other curriculum areas or departments, or the school principal does not value the contribution of the library, it may be the last department to be allocated funding. All seven independent School Principals interviewed reported allocating substantial school budgets, with two reporting an ‘open budget’; one £38,000 and the rest an average of £15,000. Interestingly, when the school librarians were interviewed about their library budget, they pointed out that there was a difference between what the school Principals claimed was allocated and what they were actually given. They claimed that once the school library was established, often it was only given running costs, although two reported that they had been given what they asked for.

Adams (2007:30) writes about the American experience and the impact of a poor library budget which is evidenced in the size and the age of the collection because of the inability to buy new books, update inaccurate resources and provide electronic materials to students. Adams notes that in order to maintain its collection, a school library media centre must purchase one book per student per year, and two books per student, if the library wants to grow. She cites the research of Holcomb, conducted in 2007, which shows that nationally there are eighteen books per student in school media centres, whereas schools in deprived areas may have less than one book per student, indicative of the budget allocated to the school library. The important point that Adams makes is that inadequate school library budgets can affect students’ intellectual freedom. Creaser and Travis reported that the Bookmark survey revealed that 61% of primary schools and 92% of secondary schools spent less than the recommended amounts on books which were given as the follows:

- i. For primary schools, purchasing 1.3 books per pupil at an average cost of £7.66 gives a total spend of £9.96 per pupil;
- ii. For secondary schools, purchasing equal proportions of adult and children’s titles, at a rate of 1.34 per pupil per year, the recommended total spend would be £14.17 per pupil. For schools without a sixth form, the level would be £13.70.

(Creaser and Travis 2007:29).

The advice given to school librarians (ALA 1998:110) is that as the library manager they should work with the school community to develop a budget that provides the buying and upkeep of all resources needed; administer the budget according to sound accounting procedures; plan for future development and financing through purchase discounts, collaborative grant writing and through partnerships with local organizations. It is interesting to read more recent reports on school library budgets such as that of Dubber and Dring (2012:4) which indicate a trend towards no change or a reduction of school library budgets. Only 16.5% of respondents to the 2010 SLG Survey of School Libraries reported an increase in budget, whereas 49. 3% reported no change (effectively a decrease given the current state of the economy) and a worrying 31.8% experienced a decrease. Of particular concern they report, is that 178 libraries (11.5%) with a budget of £3,000 or less have received budget cuts (Streatfield et al. 2010).

Although the literature sets out what needs to be in place to support effective library provision, the experience of schools in Qatar is that school libraries are poorly resourced and staffed. Salaries paid to librarians are below those of teachers, collections are under resourced, staff training and development is poor and the inspection of school libraries is not coherent or systematic. It is acknowledged that during the recession phase (1981-2000) educational institutions felt the impact of the Gulf Wars (Kuwari 1995) through the cuts in school budgets which required headteachers to prioritise between staffing and resources and resulted in shortages. However with the key legislation of the School Libraries Act (1992) which recognized that school libraries had an important part to play in developing a literate society and in helping the government in achieving its educational goals, and the increased funding available in the current phase of development (from 2001, The Vision for the Future) should have helped raise the profile of school libraries and librarians.

What has been shown in the survey, school observations and visits and has been evidenced in the author's own first-hand experience of having responsibility for school libraries, is that the case of poor funding is driven by a lack of understanding of the role of the school library and its potential contribution to students' learning, both from the perspective of school authorities and the students themselves. The only way to address this is through improved marketing to Principals by the library of its contribution to the school curriculum and raising levels of literacy and to students, by discussing the

implications of students leaving school to go to university with inadequate library and information technology skills to support their learning in higher education. Changing the way that school libraries are seen by both teachers and students by making the library an appealing and attractive place to be, where interesting events take place and where the resources and collection are up to date and meet students' needs and interests and teachers planning and teaching, is essential. It is important that school librarians have the confidence to introduce the school library to new students as a place which is fun and supports their learning and to teachers as a resource base which supports their teaching.

It is useful to return to Al-Swedan's survey of the Gulf States in 1996 which identified the existence of a basic level of school library funding and provision and discussed its impact on schools and to look at school libraries and their funding in a historical context. He found that budgets for school libraries was small; that school libraries were managed, funded, supervised and controlled by the government with no partnerships to promote school libraries in the region; that school libraries were not considered to be central to the educational and learning process; that school librarians were neither qualified nor specialized; that there is a lack of, or poor collaboration between school librarians and teachers and an absence of professional organizations that represent librarians and their interests. His research identified common issues that affected libraries abilities to fulfill their role effectively.

These issues included that school libraries were funded, managed, supervised and controlled by the government without partnerships aimed at promoting school libraries in the region; that there were differences in the quality of provision of library at different educational stages. He noted that school libraries were not considered to be central to the educational and learning process and that school librarians were neither qualified nor specialized and the budgets of school libraries were often small. Furthermore he noted a lack of, or poor collaboration between school librarians and teachers coupled with uncertainty of the role of the school librarian and absence of professional organizations representing librarians and their interests.

Al-Swedan's survey found that the library budget was inadequate, that there were weaknesses in the role of school management and that school librarians had no power to

insist that teachers and students should use the school library. Moreover, there was no integration of the school library with the curriculum and its role was not recognized in the educational process. The research of Alosaimi (1980); Hashem (1984); Banajah (1986) and Marghalani (1986) have identified common issues relating to the inadequacy of school library services and provision, staffed by unskilled school librarians who were often on part-time appointments, lacking the status to negotiate for an increase in the school library budget and detailed knowledge about the books to buy that would support the students' curriculum and learning. Similar results were found in 1987 by Manal Alberican who conducted a survey in 20 schools in the City of Riyadh.

Funding has been an area investigated within the research undertaken in Qatar. The findings suggest a relationship between the school library budget, which is poor as compared to that of teachers; the low status and pay of librarians as professionals compared to that of teachers together and finally that the funding is informed by the lack of understanding about the role of the school library and its associated contribution to students' learning. The themes highlighted in the literature will be discussed at three levels:

- i. Government level
- ii. School level
- iii. Librarian level

### **i. Government level**

Currently there is a dual system (of public schools and independent schools that fall within the authority of the Supreme Education Council) however both types of school are funded from a single government budget. They differ however in that public schools are allocated centralized funding by the Ministry of Education, whereas, the Principals of independent schools are able to decide the amount of funding that will be allocated to their library.

Figure 6.23 presents a breakdown of funding for the years 2004 -2009, comparing the budget for Education as a whole, the budget for the Ministry of Education and finally the budget allocated to School Libraries. It shows that the decreased allocation of funding to school libraries between 2004 and 2009 so that the 2008/9 budget allocated is approximately 16% of that allocated in 2004/5.

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>School libraries</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>	<b>Ministry of education</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>	<b>State of Qatar</b>
2004/2005	2,203.000	0.54	410,000.000	11.71	3500.000.000
2005/2006	1,713.000	0.40	432,358.000	8.82	4900.000.000
2006/2007	1,264.000	0.36	351,550.000	6.76	5200.000.000
2007/2008	670.000	0.17	405,200.000	5.07	8000.000.000
2008/2009	375.000	0.10	380,500.000	1.90	20000.000.000

**Figure 6.23:** Comparative budgets of Qatar 2004-2009

An analysis of funding allocation (Figure 6.23) during the period 2004/5 shows the spending on collection and equipment within the public school library budget for Qatar (comprising 185 schools). Public schools libraries claim through a centrally held budget from the Ministry of Education for IT and e-resources.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Authorized Sum</b>	<b>Authorized Sum English £</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1.	Books, reference resources, journal & Documents	1000000.00	153846.15	47.62%
2.	Magazines and newspaper subscriptions	600000.00	92307.69	28.57%
3.	Educational apparatus & equipment	500000.00	76923.08	23.81%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2100000.00</b>	<b>323076.92</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 6.24:** Public School Allocation of Funding: Collections and Equipment  
Qatar School Library Department Ministry of Education Budget 2004/2005

The five Ministry of Education authorities interviewed spoke about the importance of the school library in modern education. They were aware that both Qatari teachers and students needed to understand how they could benefit from what school libraries had to offer and how the school library provision might be developed to support students' learning. The Head of the Department for National Curriculum observed that additionally since school libraries were a relatively recent addition within the school

system (with the 1992 School Libraries Act), their function is still not fully understood within the Qatari school system:

*The school library is becoming an important tool of education, self-development and learning. However, because of the fact that school libraries only started to operate in Qatari schools in the last few decades, both students and teachers need time to understand how vital the role of school libraries is to learning* (Interview with HDNC, 2005)

The changing role of the collection and resources was acknowledged by the Under-Secretary, who observed,

*The traditional understanding of the school library has changed. Nowadays, there is a move in education and philosophy to get information and knowledge away from their original book and paper sources to electronic sources and databases. The role of school libraries should be understood within this framework* (Interview with US, 2005)

All interviewees stated that during the last ten years increased allocation of Ministry funding had resulted in school libraries witnessing major developments in terms of staffing, facilities and buildings. They anticipated that school library provision would improve in the future.

### **iii. School level**

All but one of the Independent school Principals interviewed claimed significant budgets for funding library provision, the largest amount specified was 250,000 QR (or £41,600) by the girls' secondary school (ABWIS). The budgets allocated to the school libraries by each of the Independent School Principals are set out in Figure 6.25.

<b>Independent School</b>	<b>School Library Budget (2007)</b>
KIS	100,000 QR (£16,600)
ABIS	80,000 QR (£13,300)
AWIS	<i>There is no budget for the library, all I can do is see what is left over at the end of the financial year, to see whether we can spend anything on the collection</i>
AYIS	100,000 QR (£16,600)
OIAKIS	60,000 QR (£10,000)
ABWIS	250,000 QR (£41,600)
DIS	Open budget (depended on what the library needed) but added: <i>Although the Institute of Education (IoE) promised consistent funding each year, unfortunately each year has seen a decrease in the school's budget and of course that affects the library as well.</i>

**Figure 6.25:** Independent School Budgets

The figures given by the School Principals in Figure 6.25 are problematic, in that when the same question was asked of the respective School Librarians, there was a disagreement between the amounts claimed by the School Principals and the School Librarians. This was confirmed by the researcher's own observations of the school libraries where the collections were out of date in the majority of cases and inadequate for supporting the curriculum, as were the technology and audio visual resources and physical furnishing within the library itself.

#### iv. Librarian level

The following were typical of the views held by school librarians, the majority expressing concern over the lack of knowledge or inadequacy of the allocated budget and only one reporting an improvement:

*There no budget category for the library in the school finance plan (AWIS, 2007)*

*We do not have a budget, but are only given funds if there is anything left over from another subject (ABWIS, 2007)*

*We find ourselves in a difficult position – we are not paid the same as teachers and we do not have a library budget (AWIS, 2007)*

*We are never told what the library budget is (AYIS, 2007)*

*I don't know what the budget of the library is, but I don't think that it is enough to update and cover the collection, and the new technology (OIAKIS, 2007)*

*Before (in the old public school system) the budget was for 2-3,000 pounds but now it is so much better (DIS, 2007)*

As discussed earlier, the post-2002 education system where the budget is allocated to the Principal places the school library at risk since it is dependent on the views of the Principal themselves and the value they place on the school library. The underlying problem appears to be not one of money, but an understanding of the importance of the school library in supporting students' learning; the school curriculum and how the library skills learnt can support students' future learning when they progress to Higher Education either in Qatar or abroad.

## **Discussion**

A number of staff training needs can be identified from points raised in this section:

- Awareness training for school Principals on how the school library forms part of the whole school budget;
- Librarians training for financial accountability and budget planning, enabling them to acquire professional management skills.
- Establishing a school librarians' network or association would enable librarians to gain a greater professional confidence and a forum for discussing issues including the financial management of the school library, acting as a forum for sharing guidelines and disseminating good practice.

### **6.13 The School library as a learning space**

The physical layout of the library and its organization have a major influence on the way that it is used by students and staff and it is for this reason that attention must be paid to design of the physical space and accessibility of the collection. In addition how available and accessible the library space (and indeed the virtual library) is to students and other users is important in considering how users can engage with the resources and programmes offered.

Three key themes are highlighted within the review of literature:

i. A learning space that is ‘Fit for purpose’ (AASL 2001; Tilke 2002; DfES 2004; Sheard, 2007; Price Waterhouse Cooper 2009; CILIP 2011)

ii. School library where students feel they belong (Clark 2010; Snowball 2008; Shenton 2007; HMI 2002; AASL 2001)

iii. The need for collaborative involvement of key stakeholders in developing libraries as learning spaces (Bates 2000; Tilke 2002; Strucker 2005)

A useful starting point about the function and role of the school library is made by Tilke (2002) and Barrett and Douglas (2004) who identify the key purpose of the library as a dedicated learning space that supports the learning of the whole school community. As such the design of the physical space, layout, accessibility and resources which attract students and staff to use the library to support their learning and teaching ensuring that the school library is ‘fit for purpose’, will be examined. CILIP (2011) places the student at the centre of the school library and in so doing helps define the relationship between the librarian, the physical environment of the library and learning within a physical environment characterized by safety and democracy. The idea of a dedicated ‘learning space’ moves away from the traditional view of a school library as a quiet place to access books, to an environment that actively supports students skills in accessing and understanding information and knowledge, information literacy, individual and cooperative learning (Sheard 2007).

The Qatar School Library Act 1992 gives a clear set of aspects which need to be addressed when developing the learning space:

- **Location:** informed by international guidelines relating to space, layout and design, accessibility and location to ensure quiet; and that it should be an independent space that has the potential for future expansion;
- **Space:** should incorporate different areas to include the collection; dedicated spaces for research for audio-visual, for research and study;

- **Lighting:** should incorporate natural lightening to ensure a healthy environment in addition to good artificial library; the size and location of windows should not impede access to light and furniture;
- **Temperature control (air conditioning):** to ensure a comfortable working environment
- **Design of the library:** should be a unique design so that it becomes the heart of learning for all students; avoid the use of many columns that may get in the way of library furniture or health and safety;
- **Floor covering:** use carpeted floors
- **Furniture and equipment:** think about potential increases in students and resources and plan accordingly; chose furniture of an international quality.

(QMoE 1992c).

It is interesting to note that although the Act was very specific as to best practice and innovative school library design informed by international practice, it is questionable as to whether this was ever acted upon. The experience of the author in his capacity as the Head of School Library Department in the Ministry of Education was that the guidance was not followed by the Instruction and Supply Department (also a part of the Ministry of Education) who were responsible for designing and building schools, including the library spaces. Further, at no time was the author consulted by Instruction and Supply Department staff specifically in relation to the needs or design of school libraries.

The guidance issued to school library staff in 2009 by the Supreme Education Council includes a section on designing an effective facility, noting that this does not happen by accident but that it “requires vision, planning, energy and commitment” with “careful consideration of the needs and interests of specific users” (QSEC 2009: 7, 8). The guide then lists briefly a range of aspects which should be taken into account, covering layout, furniture, lighting, colour, signage and provision for displays (QSEC 2009: 8-9). Certainly all of these aspects are important, but the guidance offers only basic advice, which could be seen as not much more than common sense. No reference to local or international standards is offered, and there are no links made between the different areas of provision which might affect design. The auditing tool provided within the

guidance is fairly limited, but does focus on the essential student-centered needs of use of space and is a way of bringing together the different aspects outlined in the guidance. This is interesting because it moves the emphasis of reflection on library quality away from meeting sets of specifications and more onto what benefits for learning and development are to be gained from library design. The section of the audit tool is shown below, in Figure 6.26:

Section	Not evident	In progress	Evident	Comments
ENVIRONMENT				
LRC makes effective use of the space provided and includes a quiet research area, a reading area and a collaborative work area				
LRC presents a welcoming and inviting environment to students and staff				
The design of the LRC reflects the age, gender and interests of the student population				
LRC uses signs, displays, posters etc to encourage students to become independent and informed learners				
LRC signage and displays show a commitment to bilingualism by using both Arabic and English				

**Figure 6.26:** Environment extract from Audit Tool (QSEC, 2009:37-38)

A comparable checklist is offered by the DfES (2004:68) aimed at helping school librarians to create accommodation that is fit for purpose. It is acknowledged that attention to the physical design and layout of the learning space (in addition to the collection and resources) is fundamental to attracting student use.

The DfES (2004:68) checklist asks fundamental questions: can a whole class use the learning resource centre alongside individual pupils studying there? Is there space available for group work? Is there an area for quiet, individual work, away from computers and other distractions? Is there an area for less formal activities eg reading for enjoyment? Is there an area for ICT activities?

Students will only use a school library if they feel a sense of belonging, in that it is an environment that meets their needs and is designed around their interests. Modern

school libraries are not only a meeting place for students, but a meeting place that supports individual and cooperative learning, reading, researching and evaluating information, thinking and study skills, personalized and creative learning. Embedded within this learning space is the concept of flexibility where the design of the space can be changed and is responsive to both developing technology (such as Smartboards) and the developing needs of the learning community (such as micro environments that include individual study spaces and group discussion spaces). The school library as a learning environment that is fit for purpose is acknowledged by the AASL (2001:95) who describe the library media centre as a place where ‘students’ belong’ rather than a place to visit, a point reinforced by Tilke (2002).

Ensuring that students and staff feel a sense of ownership of a place that they value and which supports their learning clearly requires planning. It is important to acknowledge that extensive guidance is available ranging from the summaries in Ray (1982) to more detailed information in Dewe (1995), Erikson and Markuson (2000), Australian School Library Association (2001), Charlton (2002) advising on furniture, fittings, lighting, air, health and safety, equipment and administrative accommodation, supported by checklists (DfES 2004, Sheard 2007) aimed at enabling school librarians to evaluate accommodation in relation to the activities that take place in the school library and at helping librarians work closely with school management and with architects in understanding effective use of space for student learning.

The Supreme Education Council guidelines acknowledge these needs, stating that the goals for all learning resource centres should include providing

*A modern, vibrant, welcoming and interesting environment for students and staff*  
(QSEC 2009:6)

Space is acknowledged as an issue, and even though CILIP has recommended that libraries should be able to seat 10% of a school’s students at any one time; Barrett and Douglas (2004:40) noted that according to inspectors it was rare that a school was able to do this. Streatfield et al (2010:5) reported that almost a third of their respondents (502 out of 1,542 schools) thought that their library had insufficient space.

The best example of students feeling that they belonged in the library and that it was important to them is illustrated in Clark's survey of school libraries and literacy. She reported that most young children in her survey used the library because they had easy access to books, it was a 'friendly space' and because they believed that the school library would help their reading and ultimately do better at school (2010:4). Students in the survey carried out by Bates (2000) identified a number of ways in which libraries could encourage student use, which included improvement of the physical space through making it 'brighter and more colourful' and keeping the school library open longer. Bates advised also 'keeping up to date with the times in terms of technology as a means of encouraging student use of the school library.

Shenton in contrast noted in his survey of a school's new library internet aimed at promoting the school's library, that "87% of the respondents used the library either 'never' or 'only occasionally' and as many as seven out of ten of the participating Year Ten girls fell in these categories" (2007:525). Shenton (2007:31) reported that student use of his school library was very limited and that although many pupils felt that the purpose of the library was to support their study, there was a need for greater comfort and a more informal atmosphere within the library. Bates (2000), suggesting ways to promote student use of the library, includes improving library surroundings making it '*brighter and more colourful*'. Snowball's (2008:29-30) advice for 'enticing teenagers' into public libraries supports the views of the students in Bates' research, finding it important to make the library bright and inviting with an interesting collection and a good atmosphere, involving young people in planning and asking their views.

Although Qatari schools may no longer be required to comply with the School Library Act (1992) it was clear in the observational visits made to a number of independent schools in 2010 by the author that a real effort was being made to encourage library use by students and that this involved a variety of activities. The photographs below illustrate library use in Qatar.



**Figure 6.27:** Boys' primary school: Group reading and book discussions in the school library focused at developing literacy



**Figure 6.28:** New learning resource center (Al-Wajbah elementary girls' school library)

### iii. Discussion of Qatar data

Data were gathered in the form of surveys of students and parents about library use. The survey questionnaire to students from primary, middle and secondary public schools in Qatar revealed that students used the school library for a range of different purposes.

Figure 6.29 identifies the use which students make of the library to support their learning and leisure showing that the largest number (28.7%) of public school students used the library to carry out their homework, with slightly decreasing numbers using it to improve their library skills (25.6%), to support subject study (24.83%) and for leisure purposes (20.9%).

Type of library use by students	%
to carry out their homework	28.68
to develop their library skills	25.60
for subject study	24.83
For leisure activities (reading for pleasure, browsing the Internet and using Internet for checking e-mails and games)	20.89

**Figure 6.29:** Students' use of the library (Rank order)

The survey to parents revealed that 78.1% (50) of parents stated that their child brought home library books from school to read for pleasure and that their child's teachers had shown them the school library (51.5% (33).

Frequency which library is used to carry out homework	%
Has never used the library to carry out homework	32.73
Used the library once a day	18.80
Once a term	17.27
Used the library once a week	16.36
Once a month	12.73
Don't know	2.73

**Figure 6.30:** Frequency which the library is used by students to carry out homework (Rank order)

It is interesting to note that 32.73% of students did not use the library to carry out their homework, and of those that did so, only 18.8% used it daily (Figure 6.30). Fewer students (16.36%) used the library at least once a week with 12.73% using it only once a month. The parental survey revealed that 48.4% (31) of parents were unsure whether their child used the school library at least once a week although 29.7% (19) agreed that the library was used at least once a week by their child.

This suggests that the majority of students do not see the school library as place to find information to support their homework and their learning.

Of the parents surveyed about their child's use of the school library and its facilities, 62.5% (40) stated that their children used the school library and that they brought home library books from school to help with homework (48.4%, 31). 56.2% (36) stated that their child received study skills lessons which involved the library and thought that school libraries in particular helped children to learn (54.6%, 35). 39% (25) stated that

their child's school library had a large selection of regularly updated books and that their child spoke positively about the school library (39%, 25). Further, 70.3% (45) disagreed with the statement 'I don't need to know about my child's school library – that is a matter for the teachers'. 96.8% (62) of parents thought that it was important that all children should be using a school library to support their learning.

Figure 6.31 shows the relationship between confident school library use and the opportunities available for those students to visit the library.

Can students use the library?					
		No students can't use the library	Yes students can use the library		
Library Opening Hours		Library Opening Hours			
%	Count	%	Count		
3.20	2	2.30	1	45 minutes-two hours	
19.40	12	27.30	12	Lunch Time	
77.40	48	70.50	31	Full School Day	

**Figure 6.31:** Relationship between students' confidence in library use and library opening hours

## Discussion

It is not possible to suggest a relationship between students' learning and their use of the school library. However, there is a concern that school libraries are not fit for purpose as there is little evidence that students feel as if they 'own' the school library and see it as a central support to their learning.

### 6.14 Monitoring and evaluation of the school library

Evaluation of the school library is essential in order to understand how it is fulfilling its key roles of supporting the curriculum and enabling students' achievement. Evaluation, as a process, involves gathering and monitoring evidence of activity of students,

teachers and library staff and use of collection and space; the evidence is then reviewed against school and library goals and priorities and areas for development identified and worked on. This section will examine school library evaluation in Qatar within the context of theory and guidance from professional bodies and research.

**Four key themes emerged from the literature, namely:**

- i. Monitoring and evaluation of school library provision is essential for ensuring quality (Tilke 2002; DfES 2004; Barrett and Douglas 2004; Rehman 2008).

Evaluation of school libraries is essential to ensure that they are ‘fit for purpose’. Evaluation is only useful if the analysis of evidence is used as the starting point for action for improvement or development.

- ii. A clear set of standards for internal and external evaluation is important (DfES 2004; Gildersleeves 2006)

If there are no clear set of standards or nationally accepted framework against which evaluation can take place, it is difficult to make consistent and comparable assessment of the quality of provision and nature of use, internally year on year in a school or in comparison with other schools. Without a requirement for evaluation, consideration of library contribution and value becomes optional and there is the risk that neither school management, teachers or library staff are challenged regularly to reflect on the impact of their service investment and use.

- iii. Sharing of evaluation of impact is essential towards advocating the role and value of the library within the school and to the wider community.

The public cannot be expected to understand the value of school libraries if their perception is based on out of date recollection or if the library exists separately from the schools learning goals and practices, or if students are not helped to relate their library activity to their personal development. It is the librarian’s responsibility to gather the evidence and to communicate it in a relevant form so that it can be understood and used by education colleagues, parents and students. It is the responsibility of the library community to share approaches and findings more widely so that a balanced picture of school libraries and their value can be understood.

iv. Librarians may lack experience and confidence in conducting and exploiting evaluation.

Although the significance of evaluation is acknowledged, it is important to note that Ofsted's experience from their review of 32 schools (Ofsted, 2006) is that both school librarians and head-teachers lack confidence in relation to evaluating school library provision and its effectiveness. Gildersleeves' findings (2006) confirmed this, and she further identified (2012) that school students and, at times, teachers struggled to articulate just how the library made a difference to their experience. It is therefore important to bear this challenge in mind when examining the findings from Qatar.

The literature identified three principal elements of the quality analysis and review process:

Assessment which is defined as a fact finding activity, normally concerned with students' performance and achievement. For example, in relation to the school library, a head-teacher could require the assessment of students' information literacy skills and identify how these have contributed to students' learning, wellbeing and motivation (DCSF 2004).

Monitoring is defined as the on-going process of scrutinizing and checking the progress and development over time of specific aspects of library provision and may include both qualitative and quantitative data to answer, for example, the extent to which the school library is used by girls aged 11-12 and girls aged 14-16 to support their learning - as indicated by the number of library visits, the amount of time spent in the library and the books or resources used; or collection usage differences between boys and girls.

Evaluation has both qualitative and quantitative aspects to it (Tilke 1998a and b; Pickard 2007) which include both statistical data and the views and perceptions of library users and non-users, as examples. Evaluation is informed by performance measures and performance indicators (Barrett and Douglas, 2004:68). It involves the gathering of data, its analysis, discussion and reporting of evidence about all aspects of the school library enabling the school librarian to make judgements about the effectiveness of the school library (McNicol 2004; DfES 2004) both in relation to the school library itself, for example: one year compared to another year; or, in relation to

the school aims and objectives, and further, to identify areas for development and improvement. Evaluation takes place against the context of national and school goals and priorities and brings together portfolios of evidence to provide a rich picture of activities and benefits (Gildersleaves 2012b). Monitoring and evaluation is only important if it is used to inform or improve practice or the service provided, a point identified by Tilke who notes,

*'It is not therefore sufficient merely to collect data, but to be able to utilize and promote it and advocate or promote relevant action'.* (Tilke 2002:108).

while the CILIP *Guidelines* stress the importance of the process being carried out in conjunction with wider school goals to situate library contribution within the school's priorities

*'... evaluate its performance regularly through a programme of self-evaluation agreed with the school's senior management'* (Barrett and Douglas 2004:67).

These three elements of evaluation have been highlighted because it is important to examine the degree to which they inform the practice of school libraries in Qatar. This section reviews the data on evaluation gathered from the interviews with government officials, with school principals and from the school survey, and relates it to existing Qatari policy and practice. The discussion is at two levels:

1. Government strategic level: to identify policies related to school libraries and the degree to which they are able to influence practice within schools
2. School level: to identify policies and practice within the school

### **Government strategic level**

Evaluation at the Ministry/Departmental level will examine whether:

- The named authorities were informed about school libraries; whether a school library policy or school library guidance originating from the Ministry exists that serves to guide school practice;
- there is any inspection of school libraries and the outcomes of these and whether the Ministry provide any specialist training for librarians

During the period of scope of this research school library practice in Qatar has been guided by two key documents:

- **The School Library Act (1992)**, published in Arabic, defined the role and responsibility of the librarian, the objectives and inspection of school libraries in state-funded public schools provided through the Ministry of Education. It extended to cover very specific detail including design, library space, lighting, furniture, audio-visual resources, selecting the collection, buying and in particular, in terms of evaluating library activity and provision, it included a section on carrying out an annual inventory of the collection. The Act referenced a range of international standards for space, supporting these with examples from library professional bodies from Australia, Canada, USA, and the United Kingdom. In particular the Act set out specific standards for provision of space and collection size in relation to school per capita student population, and specified that the collection should, in addition to delivering curriculum support and reader development, also hold material to help teachers, administrators and library staff improve their own skills. The Act was presented as the statutory basic framework against which (public) schools were intended to evaluate themselves and which also informed the regular inspection of school libraries by Ministry staff.

The Act gives specific standards of space (10% of the total of students in school) for example that within the range of rooms that make up the library, every 500 students must have access to a central reading room of 162 square meters; it cites standards of furniture and lighting and the amount of money allocated to the collection in Australia, Britain and USA by way of example; it specifies that each child should have ten titles and that for a primary school from 500-800 titles, a middle school from 1000-1200 titles, secondary 1200-1500 titles. It specifies that the first priority of the school library collection is to support the curriculum, but that in addition to books that are for the child's reading and enjoyment it should also hold books that will support the teachers, administrators and librarians to improve their job skills. In addition to guidance to schools, very specific guidance is given as to the selection of the collection by the Book Purchasing Committee within the Ministry of Education.

- **The Supreme Education Council ‘Good Practice Guide: Learning Resource Centres in Independence School’ (2009).** This *Guide*, published in English, was intended to replace and update the 1992 Act. Although it covers key areas,

each section differs in the depth and detail offered ranging from short paragraphs of six lines to longer sections. Section 8, *Auditing the LRC*, relating to evaluation, is one of the areas given greater detail. This section is introduced by Loertscher's staged taxonomy (2009:34-35) and followed by a simple audit tool which requires school librarians to use a 3-point scale to identify whether an aspect of the collection, staffing, environment, teaching and learning, funding and administration, ICT and access, is: 'not evident, in progress or evident'.

It is important at this point to examine the data that supported Ministry policy decisions pre 2002. An annual report on each librarian was undertaken by a library inspector based on 8-10 unannounced site visits carried out throughout the academic year. These visits were normally half day visits, and allow the inspector to talk with the principal of the school, the librarian, his or her colleagues, inspect the collection and the range of activities that the library provides etc. The annual evaluation report covered five sections with a numerical grade given for each subsection and an overall grade given for the section itself. A five point scale was awarded ranging from 0 to 2 for each individual item with 100 points allocated across the five sections which comprised:

1. Technical aspects (such as: classification, shelving, organization of resources);
2. Planning for activities (such as: organizing school visits to museums, other libraries, book exhibitions);
3. Knowledge of the School Libraries Act (1992): examined whether the librarian was able to put the Act into practice, for example, whether there was a School Library Committee within the school; whether statistics were collected and the range of developments that had been put into place to ensure that the school complied with the Act;
4. Attitudes: including self development, timekeeping, ability to follow guidance from the inspector and course attendance record;
5. Relationships with colleagues: including people skills, relationships with subject teachers, administrators, other librarians and colleagues from outside the school.

Once the report had been completed, a copy was sent to the librarian via the principal together with a letter, either commending progress or identifying areas for

improvement. Copies of these reports were also sent to the Head of the School Libraries Department enabling him to write his summary evaluation report on library provision for the year. These evaluation reports from each of the Heads of Department informed the policy makers at the Ministry of Education, who used the data to inform decisions relating to the budget to be allocated and in monitoring the quality of school libraries. In theory these areas of review would encompass both technical skills of librarians (the organization and presentation of information to make it easily accessible and usable, the collection and use of management information to inform direction), the specialist engagement skills which support and enhance student learning (promotional activities and collaboration with teaching colleagues) as well as management involvement (participation in the library committee). In practice, from the survey of public school librarians conducted in 2004 (when the School Library Act had been in force for twelve years), we can see that 45% of librarians claimed that the school library committee never met and that 37% claimed to have no library catalogue at all- though the pilot survey done with selected target group of librarians already known to the author identified only 12.5% whose library committee never met and who had no catalogue or any form of resource classification. 80.7% of survey respondents in 2004 noted a need for greater cooperation between librarians and teaching staff. Although invited to mention any other use of the library beyond class, homework and leisure reading by students, none indicated any promotional activities. This low priority for promotional activity was consistent with the author's observations of school libraries during his time with the Department of School Libraries – despite public school library budgets including an element for promotion. In effect, although the guidance from The School Library Act (1992) was intended to provide a framework for evaluation and development, in practice it appeared to have little real effect and interviews and observations of schools have shown that there is a great deal of difference between the rules set, the information and advice given on librarian courses attended and the reality of implementation in schools.

The aim of the *Guide* is that the audit tool could be used twice yearly to identify progress and areas for improvement assisting 'the formulation and review of its Mission and Goal statements' (2009:36). This is not, however, a formal requirement. The assessment categories, although important, do not include specific criteria against which to judge the level of provision or any way of defining the degree to which or the quality

of the provision as defined by the terms: ‘in progress or evident’, allowing a wide range of subjective responses to be given.

Staffing: LRC staffing includes someone who is experienced and knowledgeable about library practices: *‘not evident, in progress or evident’*;

Environment: LRC signage and displays show a commitment to bilingualism by using both Arabic and English: *‘not evident, in progress or evident’*;

Funding and Resources: LRC undertakes an annual stock take of resources: *‘not evident, in progress or evident’*;

ICT: LRC staff have an appreciation and understanding of how to incorporate Web 2.0 technologies within the LRC: *‘not evident, in progress or evident’*;

**Figure 6.32:** Extract from Section 8: Auditing the LRC (SEC, 2009)

It can be seen, therefore, that the pre-2002 system embodied in the 1992 Act laid down a formal requirement for provision and inspection, but provided little resource to encourage and enable school librarians to be active partners in evaluation with their senior management team on how their services made a difference to school goals. In contrast, the post-2002 system, as illustrated by the SEC *Guidelines*, places a more practical emphasis on evaluation as a development tool but is a voluntary process with little support in the way of standards or criteria.

An important point that has emerged from the scrutiny pre 2002 and post 2002 is concern that any guidance will very likely not be ‘followed through’ if it is not mandatory, and where there is no system of inspection or support of school librarians enabling them to evaluate their provision and identify areas for development and improvement. Further there is a clear separation between the pre 2002 system and the post 2002 system evolved by the Supreme Council of Education with respect to inspection as part of school library evaluation. Under the inspection of the public schools in Qatar (pre 2002) school library inspection was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Individual subjects (including the school libraries) were inspected by inspectors monthly (at least 8 times each year) and a visit report was presented to the Head of the Department at the Ministry. The subject inspectors met

annually to identify targets for each school in each of the curriculum subjects. However, school library inspection focused almost entirely the collection together with the annual evaluation of the school librarian themselves. Other aspects of school library provision were rarely inspected and neither was there any opportunity for cross-subject discussions between subjects to share good practice or areas of weakness, and as a result whole school overviews are not available, neither is the opportunity to highlight the impact of whole school issues such as literacy and the contribution of the school library to raising student achievement within individual schools.

In relation to the post-2002 education system, the school librarians interviewed reported:

*There is no inspection at all from the Institute of Education; it is very important that we have guidance from the Inspector. All we have is the support of our principal, to help us in our development (OIAKIS, 2007)*

*The principal recognized the importance and value of the library to his school and wanted to do all he could to support it, even though he was given decreased funding each year (OIAKIS, 2007)*

*All subjects have inspections- except for the library (DIS, 2007)*

*All inspection guidance and support comes from our principal – we do not have external inspection (AWIS, 2007)*

A key challenge therefore is how to achieve a realistic evaluation structure which combines a regular but manageable timeframe, commitment from all schools, including school management as well as librarians, and some form of national overview of the findings which will allow both a clear picture for policy makers at the Institute of Education level and give individual school principals and librarians relevant information which allows them to understand the embedding of the library in school goals and to compare their progress with other schools. This strategic approach to evaluation needs to be supported by training in the purpose and use of library evaluation for school management and for school librarians.

## **Summary**

The themes that emerged from the scrutiny of the pre 2002 Act and the post 2002 guidance in Qatar have highlighted that:

- little progress has been made in terms of mandatory evaluation;
- the guidance available for school librarians is limited in that it is framed by statements but it is not backed up by training;

- the guidance available is not used by school librarians or principals to guide and develop practice;
- few courses exist to develop the school librarian's skills and knowledge, specifically in relation to monitoring and evaluation;

## **6.15 Staffing**

Library staffing is central to an effective library which sees itself as supporting the literacy and learning of students. The key themes that emerged from the literature were that school librarians should:

- i. be appropriately qualified (CILIP 2002, Tilke 2002, Gildersleeves 2006, Turner et al. 2007);
- ii. support the learning of students (Loerscher 1999, Kaplan, 2007, Ofsted, 2006, CILIP 2011);
- iii. have a role which places them at the centre of the school community (CILIP 2007; Streatfield et al. 2010);
- iv. have access to training and professional development and a salary that reflects their role in school (Corrall and Brewerton 1999, Tilke 2002).

This section on staffing, examines the role of the school librarian and the way in which they are able to contribute to supporting student learning. Information is drawn from the literature together with data gathered from a national survey of state schools in Qatar and with interviews with independent school librarians.

The term ‘appropriately qualified’ relates to two elements: qualified in terms of having the appropriate set of skills that enable them to carry out their role effectively and reflected in their job description (for an example of a school librarian job description, produced by CILIP, see Appendix 4), and qualified in terms of formal professional accreditation mapped against a set of professional standards and knowledge areas - such as is recognized in being a Chartered librarian. Tilke advises that,

*the school librarian needs to possess knowledge and technical skills, management skills and a number of competencies', enabling them to be 'an effective communicator within the organization; proactive with colleagues within the organization; and politically skillful ... (Tilke 2002:11).*

Hughes-Hassell and Wheelock (2001) states that ‘information power’ presents the school library media specialist with a key leadership role, providing the school with professional knowledge and expertise, initiating and sustaining communication with teachers, administrators and parents with regards to all aspects of information power. It also assumes that the school library media specialist should reach out for all members of the school community and get them involved in the school library programme and providing students and teachers with information literacy skills and showing them how these skills provide an integral part of learning in all areas.

The librarian's main role according to Saetre and Willars in the IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines is to,

*contribute to the mission and goals of the school including the evaluation procedures and to develop and implement those of the school library. In cooperation with the senior school management, administrators and teachers, the librarian is involved in the development of plans and the implementation of the curriculum'. In addition they recommend that 'it is extremely important for the librarian to be accepted as an equal member of the professional staff and be entitled to participate in the teamwork and all meetings as the head of the library department (IFLA/UNESCO 2002:13).*

CILIP highlight the central role of the librarian in supporting learning, stating,

*The school librarian is the champion of the learner. Therefore, the focus of all library services and activities is the learner. The school librarian creates a variety of interactions with teachers and students in order to stimulate real learning (Barrett and Douglas 2004:2).*

The literature thus reinforces the diversity of activity and skill set needed to deliver on the fundamental purpose of the school library as enabling student literacy, reading enjoyment, independent learning and development, which in turn demands many library management functions. It stresses the leadership and collaboration with teaching colleagues, and the strategic role of the librarian in the school. This is tied to a need of understanding of the principles of information management and of the education environment, so that librarians are able to deliver on the wide range of literacies development identified in this chapter as fundamental to the role of the school library and to the practical management of the services to be able to deliver the role.

The literature presents a varied picture of requirement and presence of qualifications for school librarians. Markless (2009:1), considering the UK situation, notes that those

running school libraries may range from professionally qualified and chartered staff to teaching or clerical assistants. She notes that the existing distinctions applied within the UK education structure between academic (professional) and support (non-professional) staff are not helpful, where librarians and learning resource centre staff are often seen as non-teachers and therefore by definition regarded as support staff and by implication non-professional. This experience is backed up by Lonsdale's findings (2003:3) when reviewing research into Australian school provision. He identified that the use of the term 'librarian' to apply to a range of posts, from qualified, dual-qualified in librarianship and teaching, or not qualified at all, led to confusion around the implication of terminology and he noted that the researchers felt that this lack of clarity in turn affected wider perception of the role of librarian. This confusion in terminology and responsibility is also reported by Turner et al. in relation to UK independent school librarians, who note that

*The lack of statutory standards for school libraries in England and Wales means that there is variation in how the libraries are managed. The most common types of independent school library managers are:*

- *a Chartered Librarian, who is a professional librarian who has been accepted as a registered Member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (MCLIP) through their experience and qualifications;*
- *a qualified librarian, who has a degree or postgraduate qualification in librarianship or information studies;*
- *a teacher-librarian, who is dual qualified, with both teaching and librarianship qualifications;*
- *unqualified librarians, who do not have formal qualifications in librarianship, but may have other relevant qualifications, skills and experience;*
- *teachers, who have teaching commitments as well as responsibility for managing the library, often run school libraries which do not have a specific librarian;*
- *occasionally a member of the clerical or administrative support staff will also have responsibility for maintaining a library.*
- *There may also be other categories such as volunteers (2007:213).*

Officials interviewed within the Ministry of Education in 2005 recognized the lack of suitably qualified librarians with professional status in schools:

*School libraries have witnessed many improvements recently. I expect them to be in a better situation in the future'. At the moment we have a lack of professional librarians' (ACA, 2005)*

*The school library is becoming an important tool of education, self-development and learning. However, because of the fact that the school library only started to operate in Qatari schools in the last few decades, both students and teachers need time to understand how vital the role of school libraries is to learning. It is not just a question of funding- it is a lack of professionals who can manage school librarians (HDNC, 2005)*

One respondent from the Ministry of Education suggested that,

*More fundamental changes are required to improve the situation of school librarians. We need to change librarians' terms and conditions of employment; salaries; incentives; issue new criteria for the job; exchange with the universities and specialized centres, as well as employing more specialized staff. Incentives and support are also needed to improve the conditions of employment and encourage school librarians in their career. (DDSL, 2005)*

Recognition for the need for professionally qualified librarians had been in place since 1988 when the University of Qatar first started offering a Diploma in Library and Information Science and was further strengthened with the School Library Act 1992, requiring schools to employ professionally qualified librarians. The University worked closely with the Ministry of Education to improve the standard of the profession, both by training and by producing materials to enable librarians to carry out their work in a more informed and professional way. However, when we look at the proportion of professionally qualified school librarians (primary, intermediate, secondary and comprehensive) reported in the public schools survey of 2004 just 23.3% respondents stated they held some form of certificate in librarianship. 60% held a qualification in another non-library or information subject and 2.7% held only a secondary school certificate. 14% of respondents did not answer this question.

Interestingly, this was a significant difference from the pilot run for this survey, where 51.7% reported holding a professional qualification. This difference is likely to have been influenced by the selection of the sample for trialing the survey, given that the schools sampled were known to the author and experienced in the role of school librarian. It is also interesting, considering the findings identified in earlier sections of this chapter, that the respondents from the pilot survey tended to be more likely to be involved in regular library management team meetings, to have a library catalogue and were more likely to make the library available to students outside of the hours of the school day. These pilot respondents were also more likely to be more critical of the

suitability match of their collection to student needs. This would seem to suggest that having the benefit of a library qualification better equips school librarians to fulfill their role.

This picture is very different if the statistics for school librarians in 2012-13, in the independent system are examined. (For a full dataset refer to Appendix 3 [in Arabic]). The statistics for this year show that there were 275 staff employed as school librarians. It should be noted that these figures are not entirely representative as 41 of those staff were not in fact working in any school: these staff have taken advantage of a scheme offered to schools by the government which sought to provide employment to women but where there was a surplus of staff, they were granted the right to remain on the payroll while in practice being retired. Interestingly, a little over a third of these ‘retired’ salaried staff are women who qualified in librarianship in 2002 or 2003, suggesting that this was not seen as a long term career for this group.

Setting aside the ‘retired’ staff, the figures show 234 librarians working in schools in 2012-13. Of these, 58 (67.5%) hold some form of graduate qualification in librarianship. The statistics show that more than half of current school librarians obtained their qualification since 2000, and that a third have graduated at Masters or BA level in library or information studies since 2005. It is very clear that the majority of staff working as school librarians but without a library qualification graduated in the 1990s or even 1980s. On this basis it would seem that the natural trend is for non-professionally qualified staff gradually to be retiring and to be replaced by professionally qualified staff, and that with more than 50% of school librarians in Qatar being professionally qualified since 2000 there is now a strong pool of librarians with most of their professional career ahead of them.

This is a very positive figure when compared with the statistics from the public libraries survey of 2004. Nevertheless, it still leaves room for some concern because the School Library Act 1992 no longer applies, and there is no legal requirement for schools to continue to recruit and employ professional – or any – librarians. However, from the start of the academic session for 2013-14 the Hamad Bin Khalifi University has started a Masters qualification in library and information studies which will take on the role of offering the professional qualification since the closure in 2010 of the library and

information programme offered by the University of Qatar, and there is scope within this for the development of a schools specialism. Nevertheless, a telephone interview with the Director of the Department of School Libraries made in May 2009, revealed:

*school libraries in the public sector receive less funding than five years ago ... in the five years that had passed since your [2004] survey, librarians' salaries have not changed and that they are still below that of teachers. There is still no change in the level of librarian's qualifications or their status in schools... The same applies to the independent school libraries ... I have heard that some school librarians have been awarded an increase in salary but for that they are expected to take on an extra responsibility, such as acting as the principal's secretary. (DDSL, 2009)*

Consultation with librarians in the independent sector reflects this concern.

*We are seen as administrators and this is reflected in our salaries when compared to that of teachers (AYIS, 2007)*

*Librarians are not happy with their salary – there is about a 20% difference between what we are paid and the salaries of teachers (OIAKIS, 2007)*

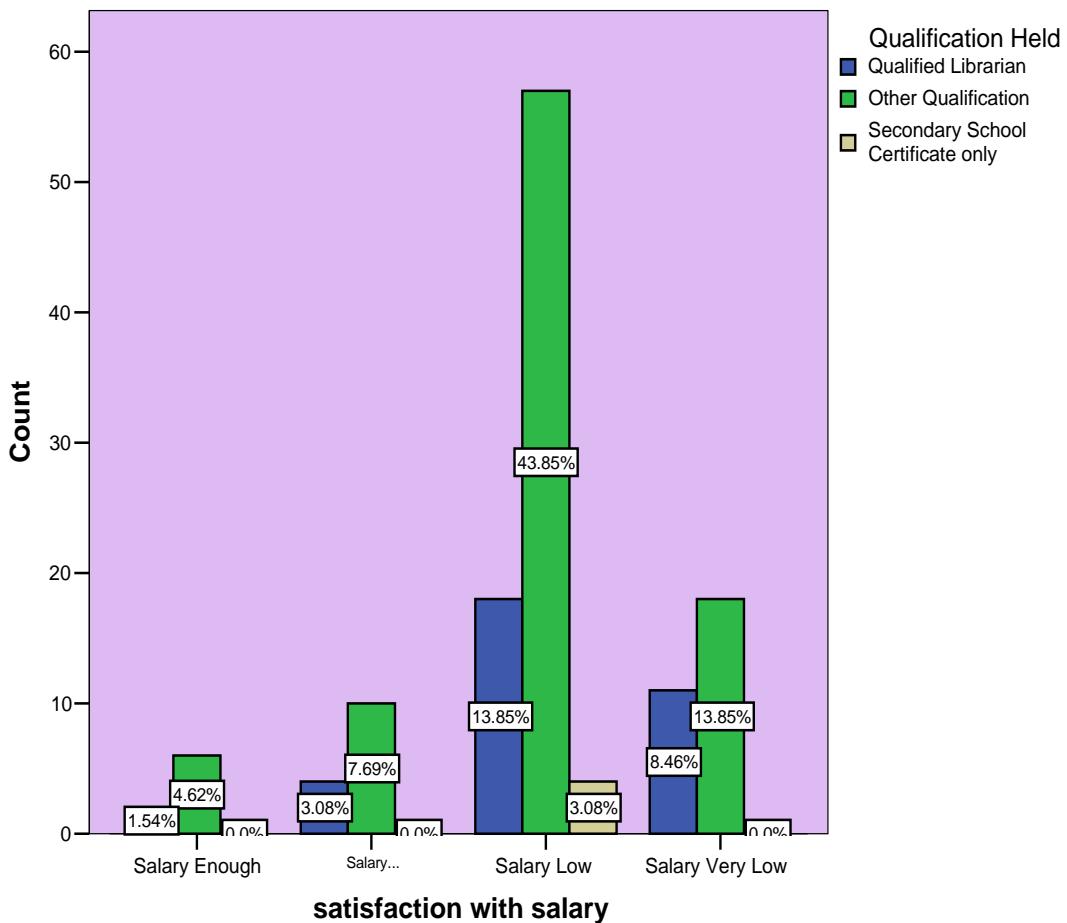
*We are not happy with our salaries – we are not paid as much as teachers; we are in a very bad position (DIS, 2007)*

This suggests that despite the overall proportion of professionally qualified staff, the perception of the role of librarian may be changing into something less specifically learning resource and literacy focused, and into a broader clerical role. This may be because, in the past, a lack of qualified professionals in library posts fostered a low perception of librarian status and these non-qualified librarians may not have been sufficiently equipped to be directly involved in the learning role or to advocate the contribution of libraries to school goals. Therefore school management may have come to see 'librarian' as equivalent to 'assistant', without clear job descriptions showing what professionally qualified librarians do and what constitutes library assistant roles. Interestingly, 90.6% (58) of parents surveyed in 2004 stated that in their view school librarians should have specialist library qualifications equivalent to teaching.

The principals of independent schools interviewed for this research all claimed that standards and specific criteria were used to appoint school librarians. Two were specific in identifying a professional librarian qualification, with one requiring experience in addition. This is a positive indication, but it is interesting to note that none of the

interviewees were able to provide the author with a published list of the criteria expected for the posts.

Figure 6.33 shows the relationship between the level of qualification held by the librarian in 2004, and their satisfaction with their salary.



**Figure 6.33:** Public school librarians' qualifications and satisfaction with salary

Figure 6.33 indicates that the two largest groups of individuals responding to this question, working as school librarians in 2004, (44% with qualifications other than specific librarianship qualifications, and 14% with specific librarianship qualifications), were dissatisfied with their salaries, reporting them as 'low'. This group represents a total of 61% of the total librarian population working in schools in Qatar. Further, an additional 22% reported that their salaries were very low. In total 83% of librarians were dissatisfied at some level with their salary and generally reported feeling

discriminated against when compared to teachers and highlighting their low status as compared to that of teachers.

The range of qualifications found amongst public school librarians has a direct impact on the perception of librarianship. Of the librarians surveyed in 2004, 62.7% stated that they lacked librarian specific qualifications (with a possible further 14%) and many of these had a limited understanding of the role of a library. As an example, one stated that he saw the library as a ‘book store’. This suggests that it would be difficult for librarians to advocate their contribution effectively in terms of a more modern learning empowerment role in a digital world.

Despite the clear growth in employment of recently qualified professional staff, the view among librarians in the independent school system of how their role and status is perceived is similar to that of the public school librarians. It is summed up by one librarian:

*There is discrimination between us and the teachers, in terms of salary, the resources in the library – we have no internet and have to use a manual system. Teachers have higher status than librarians and are treated differently by the principal. Also, teachers do not encourage their students to use the library*  
(ABWIS, 2007)

This lack of a professional understanding of the role of libraries and their role in supporting the curriculum and students’ learning has contributed to the way in which some schools view librarians, whether professionally qualified or not, having low status similar to other support and secretarial staff. There is a danger that this makes librarians’ posts unattractive to highly qualified and competent graduates, who are then less likely to pursue subjects such as library science and information technology or to use these in a school context. It may also make it hard for the new generation of professionally qualified librarians in schools to build the professional relationships with their colleagues and principals which has been identified in the literature as crucial to a whole-school understanding of their value and contribution (Ofsted 2006; Curry et al. 2008; Markless et al. 2009). This may also affect the confidence level of librarians for advocating their role. Gildersleeves (discussion at tutorial supervision, 2009) noted that in her research into the skills that UK library employers most found lacking in new professional post appointments she had found a persistent concern that librarians were not good at being powerful communicators or at being proactive in advocating for the

profession. This issue is reiterated by Swedish school Principal Edward Jensinger, who states, in relation to teacher librarians,

*I think it's important that they (TLs) are visible. Teachers are like actors. You're up on stage every lesson. They're strong personalities. As a librarian, you also have to be seen. You have to be an extrovert, whether you are as a person or not. Otherwise you're just going to get ignored. Once the librarian is visible, the next phase begins, where s/he teaches scientific method, language development and information literacy.*

(Jensinger quoted in Hay 2012).

Whilst it is positive that there are so many staff with recent library qualifications in Qatar's schools, it remains important that school librarians have access to continuing professional development, whether to support new digital skills or evaluation, inspire new ideas for promotion, or to help personal skills such as advocacy and effective teaching. The literature identifies this as an important element of enabling effective librarians, and this is particularly important in the rapidly changing digital context, as well as for the particular needs of the Qatar changing context. Loertscher highlights the importance of providing library staff with training and developing their skills in the relevant field of their specialization. He notes,

*All staff irrespective of seniority or special background will benefit from having access to adequate and relevant training opportunities which will broaden their professional development. The training programme should ensure that the knowledge, skills and expertise (including IT skills) required to deliver high quality library service to children, are possessed in all staff to an appropriate degree). Advantage should also be taken of other partnerships. For example, homework clubs might involve librarians, teachers, youth workers and parents*

(Loertscher 1999:43-44).

Lonsdale notes the increasing complexity and technically demanding nature of the job especially where the internet and technology are involved and where the school librarian is expected to support both students and staff (Lonsdale, 2003:10). Markuson (1999) stressed the importance of library staff having access to professional development beyond the initial professional qualification. The literature highlights the place of shared contribution between teaching and library staff to student learning (Loertscher, 1999; HMIE, 2005, Ofsted, 2006). Lonsdale highlights the relationship between school librarians and student learning and achievement, observing,

- *collaborative relationships between classroom teachers and school librarians have a significant impact on learning, particularly in relation to the planning of instructional units, resource collection development, and the provision of professional development for teachers;*
- *'a strong library program that is adequately staffed, resourced and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socioeconomic or educational levels of the adults in the community.*

(Lonsdale 2003:30).

These findings are reinforced by the more recent findings from the *School Libraries and Student Achievement in Ontario* which reveals that:

- *Schools with trained library staff are more likely to have a higher proportion of grade 6 students who attained level 3\* or higher on reading tests.*
- *Schools without trained library staff tend to have lower achievement on the grades 3 and 6 reading tests (both in terms of average achievement and attaining level 3 or higher).*

(Ontario Library Association 2006:2).

The findings from the literature therefore suggest the real need for staff who are professionally qualified as library specialists, but who also need a good understanding of pedagogy and of the school context, and who are committed to continuing their professional development, and are enabled to pursue this CPD commitment.

In 1992 the Joint Committee of the Ministry of Education and the University of Qatar worked together to produce a series of instructional books on library education in school libraries (*Teaching Library Skills in the School Libraries in Qatar*) in Qatar aimed at providing librarians with guidelines and the latest trends and practice in the field of librarianship. The idea of providing such support is valuable, though the rapidly developing demands of modern school librarianship mean that there is a need for any such resource to be frequently updated, and to be supported by training for staff. One of the positive consequences of the UNESCO declaration in Qatar was the establishment of a committee within the Ministry of Education, the aim of which was to develop school libraries in Qatar. To support this, the Ministry of Education held a series of training courses, seminars and workshops during 2000, to promote the skills of school libraries in Qatar. The regional office of UNESCO was also involved in these training activities. The interest and momentum however was not maintained since there

was no follow-up by the Ministry of Education, which was even then scaling back in preparation for the new education system post-2002.

Interviews carried as part of this study with officials from the Ministry of Education in Qatar in 2005 and later, identified an acknowledgement of the issues; interviewees proposed a range of approaches that could improve the current status of school library personnel. Responses noted the need for a range of training, particularly in the context of technological change, and the active support of school leaders for librarian development:

*School libraries are currently developing in many ways, and they need to serve the needs of students and teaching staff. The library staff should be provided with training on how to run a modern school library, mainly with the use of IT (ME, 2005)*

*The traditional understanding of the school library has changed. Nowadays, education and philosophy move to get the information and knowledge from its original sources and, therefore, the role of school libraries should be understood within this framework. There are many ways to improve the current status of school library personnel. These include designing specialized training programs that aim to develop the librarians' skills and to enable them to efficiently manage the school library. There is also a need for more attention and encouragement on the part of decision makers towards librarians in order for them to do better' (US, 2005)*

The interviews revealed that in order to solve the problem of having qualified and skilled school librarians, more coordination was needed between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Employment and Manpower and the University of Qatar.

Several interviewees suggested that sending school librarians abroad on training and exchange programmes would be an effective way of developing their skills and knowledge, and of widening awareness of different approaches. One interviewee suggested that the University of Qatar's Department of Libraries and Documentation could play a significant role in providing the schools with qualified school librarians in addition to providing library staff with training on the use of modern technology enabling them to offer better services. Other interviewees suggested that intensive training on how to deal with the emerging changes in the field would enable school librarians to update their knowledge and practice as well as provide better services. The majority of those who were interviewed suggested that any training targeting the

development of the skills of school librarians should be organized and run by the University of Qatar.

An interview with the Head of Library and Information Science Department at University of Qatar revealed that a number of structural changes had taken place since the early 1980s when the initial degree in History and Library Sciences was introduced. A heavy demand for librarians and information professionals in the early 1990s especially in the school libraries sector led to the university setting up a Diploma in Information Science, and resulted in the creation of the Department of Library and Information Science and a BA degree in 1998. Under the new government reforms, the Department merged with the Mass Communications Programme to form the new Department of Mass Communication and Information Science in 2005. Students graduated with a BA in Information Science and Media. Although so much progress had been made, unfortunately in 2010 the Information and Library Science section of the Department was closed. The Department had, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, been responsible also for the continued professional training of school librarians with a long-term, strategic view of the professional development of school librarians, with the intention of ensuring that they were briefed and kept up to date with international standards and developments in addition to practical and technical aspects ranging from collection management, evaluation, management of budgets and school library internet use.

The university lecturers interviewed felt that school librarians needed to be more actively involved in preparing students for further studies and agreed that the poor skills of some students affected their ability to study confidently at university. There are clear implications here for the training of school librarians.

In early 2010 an interview was conducted with Martine Raphael from the Professional Development Office at the Institute of Education of the Supreme Education Council. She reported that training and support for school librarians was one of her responsibilities and that she was running an average of nine two-day courses per year for them. She expressed concern was that although such sessions were important to the development of professional practice and improvement of library resource centres, particularly since the closure of the Department at the University of Qatar, attending

these courses was not mandatory and whether librarians are encouraged or released from work to attend was at the discretion of their school principal. Raphael also noted that although organizing and running the training was her responsibility, no additional support for this was available. She acknowledged the need to develop libraries as she was not satisfied with what she had observed in the schools that she had visited. In particular, Raphael commented on the poor space, inadequate collections and lack of technology she observed. She also expressed concern that some librarians in girls' schools were more concerned with making the libraries attractive rather than ensuring that the libraries operated as spaces that supported learning, and that school libraries in Qatar did not follow international standards.

Raphael developed the *Good Practice Guide for Learning Resource Centers in Independent Schools* (QSEC, 2009), already discussed earlier in this chapter, in response to these concerns. The handbook provides valuable support for developing library resource centers, and confirms the key challenges of linking in school libraries to current educational goals and visions identified within this chapter. However, Raphael acknowledged there was a need for further work in this area at policy and practical levels; she also identified a need for additional support and funding from the Institute of Education, for her own work, for example to carry out follow-up supervisions or visits to school librarians to look at developments, issues or improvements following professional development courses. Subsequent to this interview in 2010, Raphael moved on and there is currently no post fulfilling this CPD role for librarians.

In the absence of someone carrying out this coordination and development work, whether as an individual Institute for Education post or as part of a professional body supporting librarians, it is difficult for Qatari school librarians to take advantage of the sort of resources which are available to UK school librarians, such as the advocacy materials aimed at head teachers, including the *SLA Primary School Library Charter* (SLA 2010) or the leaflet produced by the School Libraries Group of CILIP intended for individual school librarians to distribute to their school governors and parents, advising them of what they should be expecting from professional input by a qualified librarian in their child's school (See Appendix 4).

## **Discussion**

The key point that emerges from the staffing section in relation to Qatar is that staffing is a major issue. This has come about because of a past low base of professionally qualified school librarians and a lack of understanding nationally of how effective libraries and librarians contribute to school goals.

Although this situation has radically changed during the period of this research, it is still the case that a third of school librarians lack any library and information qualification. With the devolution of greater responsibility directly to school principals in the new education system, there appears to be less of a uniform structure in place to shape formal job descriptions and expectations of the role of the school librarian. A lack of understanding by school principals and teachers of the role and the potential contribution of the school librarian to students' learning has resulted in school librarians being viewed as having a lower status than teachers, and as similar to secretarial or support staff, with lower salaries and limited promotion opportunities. It cannot be claimed that the fault lies only with school principals and teaching staff when some librarians surveyed showed a limited understanding of the role of a library, though it is considered that the situation has undoubtedly improved since the 2004 survey. However there was worrying indication that in some schools in recent years the role of librarian has become increasingly clerical administrative in function, despite the rise in proportion of qualified staff. It is proposed that Qatari school libraries still largely correspond with the Level 5 ("needs improvement") descriptors relating to question 7c of the DfES *Improve your library* evaluation support booklet, specifically

- i. *The number, qualifications and experience of LRC staff are not adequate for the demands of the school and the curriculum;*
- ii. *Staff do not have current job descriptions and have only notional line management access; they are not involved in staff appraisal schemes;*
- iii. *There are few opportunities for professional development and staff are not involved in professional activity;*
- iv. *Other staff, including teachers, learning support/teaching assistants, technical staff and clerical staff, are unavailable or not deployed in a way which effectively supports the LRC;*
- v. *Volunteer helpers (adults and pupils) are unavailable or not deployed to the best effect and do not receive appropriate training and support (2004:90).*

There is still not a culture of teachers encouraging their students to use the library. Librarians also do not have pedagogy training and may lack advocacy skills. Equally, there is no training on best use of library resources and collaboration with librarian colleagues embedded within the training on offer to teachers. As a result, the expertise of school librarians where it exists is not fully utilized within school to support student learning and the curriculum, either through working in collaboration with teachers or directly with students.

There are few opportunities for continuing professional development currently available, although there is some evidence of informal networking and shared training sessions being run by school librarians at a local level. When Raphael was running short workshop courses for librarians she noted that an issue was that the opportunity for attendance was at the discretion of school principals, and there was no mechanism for compulsory continuing development of librarians. At present there is no formal CPD officer for librarians within the Institute of Education, since the closure of the post of Learning Resource Centre consultant. There is no other professional body who might run such training events, though there is potential for a collaboration here between the Hamad Bin Khalifa University and the University of Qatar.

## **6.16 Conclusions from Chapter 6**

The process of addressing the third research question has revealed a number of key areas within a context of rapid change of the educational system in Qatar which reflects the importance of school libraries:

- The key contribution of the school library is to the development of students and increasingly their families as readers. Reading skills are seen as central to developing student learning, motivation and importantly independent learning and achievement. Additionally, school librarians and libraries are able to offer students and teachers the opportunity to develop information literacy skills enabling students to become confident Internet users, accessing global research and labour markets. The digital revolution requires students to understand, evaluate and make safe use of digital information and resources.

However, a lack of systematic implementation of information literacy within schools has been highlighted as a consequence of the school librarian's status and skills. Where the school librarian lacks the skills and knowledge to support information literacy, through lack of training and lack of a professional body to support their development, they are unable to fulfill the potential that a professional school librarian is capable of contributing to the learning of both students and teachers and students' achievement. Although Qatar has a focus of developing and improving education, of particular concern is that because information literacy skills are not being developed systematically, this has an impact on the students themselves where they are unable to acquire the independent learning skills necessary to support their learning in school. This in turn disadvantages students who progress to further and higher education whether in Qatar, the Gulf States, UK or Ireland. Unlike school, university places a heavy emphasis on independent study, personal research, the use of electronic resources and databases and the fundamental use of library resources and of information literacy to support learning. Information literacy is also important to all citizens as a life skill for engaging in the global digital world.

In addition to helping to prepare students for the future through the development of information literacy skills, school libraries provide opportunities for reaffirming cultural heritage. The school library has a recognized role to play in safeguarding 'intangible' cultural heritage which is vulnerable because it can be lost through not being shared with younger generations. School libraries provide opportunities for passing on this cultural heritage to school children and their families through storytelling, poetry, songs, rites of passage events, traditional crafts and artifacts encouraging families to visit the school library, enabling them to re-examine their cultural and religious heritage and identity. Wider family involvement can take place through children interviewing family members and extended family, recording their stories and experiences to create local archives of recordings, photographs and artifacts located within their school library. The school library and librarian thus have a role as initiator, creative partner, curator and as a space where cultural activity can take place. Importantly these help to address the tension between progress, the new and the old, to promote awareness of national cultural heritage as well as raising awareness and "openness towards other cultures in the context of its Arab and Islamic identity" (QGSDP 2008:19).

i. If we accept that there are clear benefits of school libraries to student learning, this means that there are important implications for the overall resourcing and management of the library in relation to the collection as a learning resource, ICT and digital issues, access to a consistent planned budget and evaluation. A key issue highlighted was that the school library and its collection were not perceived as a serious resource, an aspect not helped by the lack of communication and partnership between subject teachers and librarians in ensuring that the collection supports the curriculum and students' learning. This link of collection to curriculum has become more complex during the span of the period researched, both because of the pace of change in the education system and changes to the curriculum content and the balance of teaching in Arabic and English, and because of an equally rapid change in the publishing industry relevant to schools. The research found that the centralized resource system operating in the old Ministry system meant that librarians had little engagement in collection development; however the centralized system did enable the Ministry to identify appropriate material from within a very limited publication range. However the new education system no longer operates a centralized resource identification and distribution scheme but at the same time there is a growing availability of non-Arab language materials aimed at the school age groups, being provided by a range of publishers and publishing agents, which together places a much greater expectation on school librarians to make effective selection choices for their collections.

ii. It was apparent that students themselves did not perceive the school library as a resource which would support their learning and achievement. It was not possible to suggest a direct relationship between students' learning and their use of the school library in the research undertaken. However, there is a concern that school libraries are not fit for purpose as there is little evidence that students feel as if they 'own' the school library and see it as a central support to their learning. The research has shown that library space needs to be flexible for different learning and leisure use and to appeal to students; however of concern is that decisions about the design and location of the library space are taken without consulting school librarians. The Supreme Council and Public Works Authority make decisions about the location, size and layout of the library which affects student access and the way the library works. Examples that emerged from the research included: locating the library on the first floor or another area away from centres of student activity rather than locating in the centre of the school;

inadequate or poor quality of lighting; the creation of space which appears physically attractive but may not work in practice in terms of enough room for students to move around; spaces for meeting formally or informally for study, staff planning etc, quiet study; internet access; small group discussions; adequate office space for the librarians' technical duties; and sufficient space for effective layout of shelving and furniture.

iii. The increased use of technology in the use of personal tablets which carry 'library access', although offering instant access to resources, could potentially create a distorted view of a school library shaped exclusively by e-books, electronic resources and newspapers, references and research searches through Google. This virtual collection and library for some students may replace the physical space and the need to use the school library as a means of developing their extended reading and learning, literacy, curiosity and imagination. It is clear that both advantages and disadvantages are highlighting the need for careful management to ensure that the professional skills of the school librarian and their understanding of how to support learning are not lost, and to ensure that students understand that school libraries are more than a button on a computer screen. It is as yet unclear whether reliance on the virtual library may have unintended effects on students' sustained reading skills and enthusiasm, affecting essential literacy skills in Arabic and English.

The key issues arising from these rapid developments in ICT and government targets relate to resourcing, training implications of library staff and in monitoring and evaluation of the impact of ICT on the improvement of management, administrative processes, learning environments, teaching methods and education outcomes. Monitoring and evaluating the 'promise' of ICT is essential, to ensure that schools actually involve school libraries in supporting the curriculum and whether ICT can demonstrate a positive impact on student learning, especially with the rapid development of ICT and the Internet globally. Emergent issues include those of Internet safety and ethical use of digital material where school librarians in Qatar are in a strong position to advise and educate students, staff and parents. The contribution of school librarians in providing support and training for students, their parents and staff on information literacy and Internet safety and issues such as cyber-bullying are areas which schools fail to take advantage. These areas are of particular importance when students progress to university either in Qatar or abroad where there is a focus on

independent learning and where university libraries are expected to be used as resource centres for supporting academic study and research. An inability to research effectively within the digital environment or to use ICT confidently may affect student progression in terms of their being able to complete assignments successfully and may also give rise to incidents of plagiarism for which there are academic penalties in universities.

A number of budgetary training needs for both school Principals and school librarians have been identified. These include a need for awareness training for school principals on how the school library forms part of the whole school budget and training for librarians in financial accountability and budget planning, enabling them to acquire professional management skills. The research has found that this would be usefully supported by establishing a school librarians' network or association which would enable librarians to gain a greater professional confidence and a forum for discussing issues including the financial management of the school library, allowing for the sharing of guidelines and disseminating good practice.

Evaluation plays an important part in assuring the quality of school library provision. The pre-2002 system embodied in the 1992 Act laid down a formal requirement for provision and inspection, but provided little resource to encourage and enable school librarians and senior managements to evaluate the impact of the school library on school goals. In contrast, the post-2002 system, as illustrated by the SEC *Guidelines*, places a more practical emphasis on evaluation as a development tool but is a voluntary process with little support in the way of standards or criteria. The voluntary aspect is an issue as there is concern that any guidance will very likely not be 'followed through' if it is not mandatory, or where there is no system of inspection or support of school librarians, enabling them to evaluate their provision and identify areas for development and improvement. The concern is that any guidance available is not used by school librarians or principals to guide and develop practice and that school librarians lack the necessary skills to carry out monitoring and evaluation as they have little access to training courses. The research therefore has found that the lack of systematic evaluation nationally and a lack of training and guidance make it difficult for schools and school librarians to recognise good practice examples or to see the benefit that evaluation can make to their own practice and contribute to learning and information literacy.

iv. These key resourcing issues and management which emerge from the Collection, ICT, budget and the need accountability and evaluation have important implications for how the librarian's role is understood by educators and how school librarians acquire and develop the skills to work in partnership with teaching colleagues. The issue of professional status is a recurring theme throughout chapter 6 which indicates that the lack of professional training and lower pay relative to that of teachers has a direct impact on the status held by school librarians, specifically effecting their ability to lead whole school developments such as information literacy that require them to work in partnership with teachers and advise on the curriculum and the role of information literacy in supporting students' learning. Where the school librarian is not recognised as part of the school's central management team, they are unable to advise or bring about a change in whole school practice. The research has found that the combination of the lack of recognised status and the lower pay makes it particularly difficult to recruit enough men into school librarian roles therefore reinforcing the general perception that school librarianship is a female, low pay and low status profession. Of further concern are the indications that the role of librarian may be changing into something less specifically learning resource and literacy focused, and into a broader clerical role. This may have historical roots because of the lack of qualified professionals in library posts fostered a low perception of librarian status and poor skills. Their inability to advocate the contribution of libraries to school goals have also contributed to the school librarian being perceived as an 'assistant', without a clear job description showing what professionally qualified librarians do. There is clear evidence of the difficulty of recruiting qualified librarians into schools who are dissatisfied with current roles and career prospects. There is concern that their lack of perceived professionalism and access to training and development undermines their careers, their salaries and status as members of the school community and their contribution to learning within the school.

Training is acknowledged as central to the developing role and status of the school librarian, and as part of this the creation of networks both at national and on a wider Arabic scale which enable the sharing of good practice, research and ideas and develop advocacy, are seen as fundamental to the evolution of the profession.

## **Chapter 7: CONCLUSIONS**

Education in Qatar stems from teaching rooted in Islamic belief, influenced by the intellectual and cultural legacy of its Arab-Islamic roots. During the last few decades the education sector has witnessed dramatic changes that have resulted in an educational system that has evolved from private religious teaching of Quran and Islamic principles, to a modern system of education which includes changes in schools' vision, values, pedagogy and curriculum and an emphasis on Information Technology aimed at educating young people for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Changes have also included a new school system where schools have moved from a controlled centralized system to become independent schools with the establishment of the Supreme Education Council in 2002.

### **Reflection**

It must be acknowledged that the author's personal contacts and standing were crucial in assisting in obtaining access to senior policy makers, schools, participants and restricted access documentation, so enabling the research to be carried forward. When the research was originally framed at the outset, the focus was intended to be on areas of development of the public school library. However, the coincidence of the research period with the rapid pace of educational change in Qatar demanded a substantial rethinking and extension of aspects of the research to encompass the changes to the education system including the setting up of the Supreme Education Council and the introduction of the independent school system, with an entirely different funding and governance structure.

As a consequence, the research process was not carried out in a linear way, but had to be responsive to ongoing national changes. However, an advantage from this has also been the longitudinal perspective that has been possible in considering libraries across the ten-year period. An important learning point from this process has been the recognition of how significant the societal and national policy context have been as part of the environment within which the research was carried out and the impact that these changes have on schools and importantly the potential contribution of school librarians to students' learning. The original intent of the research was always to contribute towards strategic development of school libraries, but the findings from the study in the

light of the rapidly changing context have reinforced the author's sense of responsibility and urgency in informing policy makers of the outcome of this research to ensure that the benefits of positive school library development can be maximized in achieving the National Vision 2030 and beyond.

The message throughout all the reforms that have taken place emphasize the high priority the Government places on the development of Qatar as a literate, advanced, knowledge-based society where students have well-developed research and critical thinking skills. In contrast, library policy appears to have taken a retrograde step; it does not appear to be part of the educational revolution which has created independent schools and reorganized the education system. In the middle of the extensive curriculum reforms that have taken place in Qatar since 2002, detailed consideration of the role of the contribution of school libraries to learning in schools still needs to be addressed.

The potential for university trained library specialists within Qatar was placed at risk with the closure of the specialist department. This has implications for both the qualifications and status of the profession and the ability of schools to ensure that students progressing to university have the right skills set that enable them to engage in independent learning and research.

A strength of the research methodology chosen for this study was the mixed approach, combining surveys and interviews with policy makers, school principals, library practitioners across all phases of education – including university – and, indeed, consultation with the consumers of education as represented by students and parents. Whilst the precise detail of the survey instruments would need to be adapted and improved, this triangulation of perspectives and experience would be a useful approach to use again in perhaps another five to ten years' time, to review and evaluate the development of school libraries in relation to the recommendations proposed by this research, and aligned with reviews of the achievements of the National Vision. Of particular interest would be to see whether the experiences of university students, lecturers and librarians may change, in relation to developments in school library support of information literacy. The number of parents and school students sampled was relatively small, and future research might seek to widen this to obtain a more detailed picture of the development of public perceptions of school

libraries and of reading, particularly in conjunction with the importance of public children's library provision planned by the Qatar National Library.

**The study undertaken aimed to examine the following questions:**

Research Question 1: What evidence exists of the critical evaluation of the role and effect of school libraries in Qatar, which might be used by policy makers to inform school library development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

Research Question 2: How has the development of educational policy within Qatar influenced the role and activity of school libraries within the last 30 years?

Research Question 3: What are the critical factors contributing to successful school libraries which may be identified from the experience of other countries; how do the experiences of Qatari public school libraries compare with these?

**Four key themes have emerged from the research undertaken:**

- Access to information and use of information to inform school library practice;
- Development of a research and evaluation culture around school libraries, especially of evidence-based practice;
- Advocacy of the contribution of school libraries to learning, in particular in the digital age;
- Recognition of the school librarian as an education professional equal to teaching colleagues.

Key points are drawn from the analysis of findings from each of the research questions and contribute to the original contribution of the study undertaken.

**7.1 The process of addressing the first research question has revealed six key points:**

1. There is a lack of systematic review of school library contribution to education in Qatar, especially in trying to understand how school libraries help to deliver national education goals. As a consequence school library practice is not informed or embedded in policy or research literature; it is not subject to review and evaluation to identify how school library provision supports learning and national education goals of developing literacy and does not support the development and sharing of good practice and ideas to the school library community.
2. Access to much of the relevant research and information is largely restricted to high-ranking members of government departments, which both places considerable onus on a small number of individuals and limits the usefulness of the information. Lack of school library expertise by individuals with access to this information has meant that decisions affecting the quality or development of school library provision are harder to make. This knowledge management issue places extra difficulties where staff roles change within the Institute of Education or the wider Supreme Education Council, whether ministers or specialists. Likewise, although reports were in existence they were not circulated beyond the ministerial group directly involved and were not therefore able to inform the practice of school principals or librarians.
3. Although both archived and current information existed, this was considerably fragmented and was available only to policy makers or those directly involved. This limited access prevented individuals putting together an ongoing and coherent picture to emerge which could be used to inform decisions by policy makers and practitioners, be used by school library professionals to help inform or improve practice, or be used in any form of evaluation for example, to inform budgetary requirements or examine impact of school libraries on students' learning or education. It is proposed that this was the result of a lack of a clear records management policy and structure which would embrace education and library documentation. It is further complicated by the rapid changes within the education system during the period of the research study which involved changing responsibilities within the restructured central education system.

4. There is a lack of culture among school librarians towards self-evaluation of services or sharing of practical experience which could benefit the school library community at large. Although there began to be evidence of public awareness of school library promotional and development activities in the later years of the period covered by this research, in the form of newspaper articles publicizing reading and information events run for or within schools, the author has been unable to find regular or even occasional reflective reports and case studies written by school librarians and shared among the library and education professions. This is indicative of a fragmented provision, with a group of professionals not used to working together under the guidance of a single professional body or having the experience and skills to turn their experiences into writing tailored for different policy, practitioner or academic audiences. Visits to schools and discussions with school librarians indicated that school librarians were interested in sharing practice and ideas with others but lacked the skills and opportunities to meet and network with colleagues.

5. This lack of culture and lack of targeted and ongoing school library research may well be linked to a lack of a single organization with professional responsibility for libraries overall and more specifically school libraries. Bodies such as ALESCO, representing education interests across a wide geographical remit, have not had any significant influence on the practice of school librarians in Qatar, either through the implementation of standards or professional training and development, or the creation of sharing research or best practice. What has been indicated by the research is that school librarians do not feel connected or supported by existing bodies such as ALESCO which are seen as being outside of the country and have been perceived as having different priorities since they are involved in Arab countries of varying degrees of development and which have meetings normally once a year or even less frequently. Preference was indicated for a national Qatari organization which was able to address the needs of school librarians within the context of Qatar and which held frequent local meetings.

6. The lack of a professional organization championing the school librarian has had an effect on the confidence of school librarians and their role in supporting learning in school. The closing of the Information and Library Science section at the University of Qatar and the disbanding of the Department of School Library at the Ministry of

Education, which included inspection of school libraries, have also contributed to the developing low status of the school librarian and their confidence as professionals contributing to learning.

## **7.2 The process of addressing the second research question has revealed seven key points:**

1. The present pace of change is very rapid and reflects important aspirations for improvement in literacy and independent learning within school and more widely within the educational, social and cultural future of the country and in contributing to labour market needs. It is proposed that school libraries could play a useful part in this through supporting independent learning, access to the curriculum and information literacy.
2. There is awareness of the potential to include school libraries in education policy development, particularly in the vision of Her Highness, but as yet there is little mechanism for demonstrating this in education policy and strategy.
3. There is a need for a clear vision of the role and value of school libraries, supported by a clear set of school library standards to be put in place with clear accountability: school principals will be accountable to the Supreme Education Council and school librarians accountable to the school principal.
4. Mapping the school library contribution against curriculum, information literacy and learning objectives at both national and individual school level to demonstrate the contribution of the school library to learning, needs to take place and responsibility for this to be established as part of the wider evaluation of school library provision.
5. School library advocacy which can communicate the vision, value and contribution to the public generally and to parents, students and teachers specifically; responsibility for this, is essential. There are number of opportunities available to support this which include: the creation of a professional organisation which will advocate on behalf of school librarians; the creation of specialist training courses by Hamad bin Khalifa University/UCL Library and Information Science Department and the University of

Qatar, and developing links with the Qatar National Library all of which will help to raise the profile of school librarians in terms of status and developing skills. It is proposed that a stronger, more confident body of school librarians will be able to advocate on their own behalf.

6. The Qatar National Vision recommends centrally determined guidelines, but the School Libraries Act (1992) no longer has any application; further, the 2009 guidelines were an informal document directed only to school librarians. There is therefore an urgent need for comprehensive and practical guidelines written for school management which are supported and reinforced by training and development; responsibility for this, needs to be established.

7. Although conferences and training provide support and motivation for school librarians, there is a need for pragmatic development of recommendations made. Consideration should also be given to how school librarians are involved in mainstream education conferences in which they can highlight their engagement in learning, rather than being restricted to library-specific events or as passive consumers of education conferences. The involvement of school librarians as partners in wider education community networks would serve to raise the profile and potential contribution of school librarians to learning amongst other staff and address feelings of isolation and being separated from colleagues in school.

In summary the key areas that have emerged so far relate specifically to how the concept of a modern school library or LRC should contribute and deliver the expectations of 21<sup>st</sup> century Qatari education policy. These concern: how to achieve a consistent vision and sustainable delivery of library purpose; funding and activity for all school management teams; how to ensure that the school library is built into wider school system of standards, benchmarking and evaluation; how to develop and support an advocacy campaign for teachers, trustees and parents on examining expectations from a good school library and librarian; practical support in the form of training, guidelines and models for school librarians and for teachers; and the development of networking and support channels for school librarians in the form of a professional organization the focus of which is to develop practice and raise the profile and status of school librarians.

Failure to address this infrastructure is likely to have long term negative impact for the critical reading and research skills of students intending to progress to university education and to become the intellectual force of Qatar's future.

### **7.3 The process of addressing the third research question has revealed a number of key points:**

1. Legislation by itself is not sufficient to bring about a change and consistency of practice and to support a coherent school library system across all schools. To ensure that legislation becomes embedded in practice requires the cooperation and commitment of school principals; the implementation of systems of monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the legislation is acted upon; responsibility for school library services and provision at a senior government level and the creation of a professional organization that will advocate for and train school librarians within their education context.
2. School principals need to include the school library within the vision and commitment to education which they hold for their school with school librarians being an integral part of their school's management team which can only occur if there is a change in the way that school librarians are viewed in comparison to other staff in schools and are acknowledged as having the skills to make a contribution to learning.
3. School financial planning needs to include structured and planned budgeting for the library; implicit within this is the need to develop a toolkit for budget planning, and training for school librarians. The training and skills required for budget planning can most effectively take place through professional qualifications and the support of a professional organization where school library specific issues can be addressed.
4. School principals and teaching staff need to recognize how the school library adds value. Examples of best practice have emerged from the study, such as Ali Bin Talib boys' middle school in Doha (2009) who have set up a 'resource media centre' organized by a professional librarian with 5,000 books and an electronic library containing 30,000 electronic books with the aim of developing independent learners and

critical thinkers. Ali Bin Talib boys' school is an example of where the school librarian and the principal work in partnership guided by the principal's vision of developing a 'reading habit and an education learning environment that is not restricted to the classroom'. It is important that communication of such examples of best practice is not dependent on the interest of the media only; these can be publicized and celebrated at a national level through professional education and library networks and a professional body raising the profile of schools and sharing their ideas and acting as an advocate for school librarians and their contribution to learning.

5. A programme of evaluation and advocacy needs to be implemented to demonstrate value across all areas of activity, specifically involving communication and reporting of library engagement; teacher and student feedback and mapping student learning with library engagement; Specific needs identified include: toolkit development to support evaluation and staff training in evaluation and advocacy. A role for a professional organization is clearly highlighted again here, supporting teachers and librarians in working together in this area. There is a limit to what schools can do as individuals, but collaborating within a professional organization offers opportunities for training and the development and testing of materials.
6. There is a need to position the school library conference approach into a wider context of education conferences for school principals and teachers, as well as separately for librarians. Placing the school librarian within the context of the wider school communities helps to raise the profile of school librarians.
7. Specific needs have emerged in relation to the training and development of school librarians. These include a need to understand children's reading and literature, the skills to develop creative reading promotion and the need to build evaluation into such reading promotions. There is a need for greater familiarity with the school curriculum and with teaching approaches which will enable school librarians to identify ways in which they support learning in school and support awareness and training for internet safety in e-learning. These areas of responsibility in turn dictate a need for strong collection and budgetary management. Finally it has been shown that there is a clear need for the building up of school librarians' skills in conducting and exploiting evaluation for service development and for advocacy. It is acknowledged that while

individual schools develop pockets of good practice, opportunities to share, discuss and develop collective ideas within a network are seen as essential to the development of good practice across Qatar. School library conferences with opportunities for training and workshop activities would serve to raise the confidence, expertise and profile of school librarians enabling them to promote the contribution they can make to learning in their schools. It would also be helpful if some form of ideas bank could be set up to capture creative initiatives, practical toolkits and best practice examples so that school librarians can easily draw on a pool of shared experience. This would help to reduce isolation, improve the wider awareness of librarians' activities and cut down on localized re-invention of existing work.

8. Collaboration between school librarians and public library colleagues offers opportunities for raising the profile and professional identity of school librarians especially if these two groups are brought together under the sponsorship of the Qatar National Library. The Qatar National Library is ideally positioned to give leadership in the area of advocating the role of libraries generally to the public, in which school libraries play a part.

9. School librarians need to understand teaching theory and practice and the curriculum, if they are to be effective partners with teaching colleagues. The advantage of dual qualified librarians is highly recommended in that they are able to cover both teaching and librarianship. This is an aspect of their role that can be developed through continued professional development courses organized at a national level potentially through collaborations between the University of Qatar; the Qatar National Library and through a professional organization for school librarians; there is also the opportunity to embed pedagogy and classroom skills for librarians within the new Masters programme in Library and Information Studies run by the Hamad Bin Khalifa University.

10. It is proposed that in order to ensure that students' development of information literacy, that students are assessed on their use of research skills and Information Literacy including creative and critical use of the e-library. In addition to supporting learning at school, this is seen as an important skill that will support student learning at university, both in Qatar and for students studying abroad where there is an emphasis on independent learning. This has implications for the development of librarians as

assessors and evaluators able to use a range of methods to track student progress whether this is through reading records to inform progress in student literacy or the contribution of an e-library portfolio tool which could include feedback from librarian on student reading and information literacy development.

11. There is a need to develop existing collections to include combining information and fiction resources; print and electronic forms and monitor whether the proposed e-library will give subscription access to a broad range of resources or only basic entitlement for all schools. There is a need for easier access to a range of relevant publishers, agencies, design and technology suppliers, enabling school librarians to be better informed of the resources on offer and of the choices open to them to make best use of their budgets. One possibility would be an annual or biennial trade fair bringing together a wide range of providers to showcase resources, perhaps organized by the Qatar National Library. The National Library or a dedicated school library professional body could act as a lead in creating a consortium approach and supporting collaboration for a more powerful backing to the negotiation of an e-library, in addition to offering opportunities for the examination of existing school library collections and resources and offer sharing and buying opportunities that would enhance provision in schools.
12. Opportunities for an effective on-line catalogue tool need to be investigated, both to improve access within the school library in support of student research and learning, and to link into the wider use of the tablet-based e-library, to encourage student use of a wide range of resources from anywhere, in different contexts. This raises an opportunity for a shared VLE platform across all schools and a role for the school librarian in managing the school's virtual study site with digital and web 2.0 tools tied into library resources linked from the school library website, and selected in conjunction with the needs of curriculum teachers. Although VLEs can be created at individual school level, the expansion of this to encompass all schools needs to be organized at a senior education level to ensure the purchase of an appropriate system, the design and function of which is fit for purpose; is appropriately funded and staff trained staff to ensure that the system operates efficiently.
13. The school library design, its location, size and opening hours should be re-examined by schools to identify whether the provision is appropriate for the school

community. Consultation with school librarians by the Public Works Authority at early stages of design or where re-design is called for when provision does not meet needs, is seen as a positive way to improve provision, specifically in relation to location, size, access and physical layout of the school library. It is vital that librarians are seen as active partners in any such development of the physical space as they have the direct understanding of how the space works, and how students use the library for many different purposes, in general and in their particular school situation. It would also be extremely helpful if there were an easy to use bank of library design case studies, or a selection of images from best practice library spaces; potentially this could be collected at an international level by IFLA Schools Section, but within Qatar this could be collected by the Qatar National Library or by the Institute of Education.

14. It is proposed that an appraisal of how the school library can take on a more prominent role in cultural and learning events involving the wider school community is needed. There are opportunities here for school libraries to develop a wider cultural role including enabling families to become aware of, and celebrate both their culture and that of other nations; providing access to both Arabic and English language materials and artifacts thereby supporting literacy and an understanding of the relationship that Qatar has with other countries, and seeing Qatar culture and development in a global context especially with the changes that have taken place most recently. This would extend the exciting work already being done by the digitization project collaboration between the Qatar Foundation and the British Library, to include a range of resources at the more local level also.

15. Staffing is a major issue that needs to be addressed. Differences in salaries between school librarians and teachers; qualifications; status and opportunity to influence practice in schools through having management responsibility, all need to be addressed to ensure a confident influential profession. A review of school librarians' salaries needs to take place with an implementation of an appropriate salary structure that reflects librarians' level of experience, expertise and qualifications that brings them into line with the salaries paid to teachers rather than administrators. As part of the salary review it is proposed that there is the creation of specialist standards for school librarians, leading from basic levels through to Chartered professional qualification status, including Bachelor and Master's degree level, which may be directly related to revised

pay scales. This needs to be backed by clear model job descriptions that make clear the purpose and responsibilities of school librarians and distinguish these from library assistant roles.

It is anticipated that raising the professional profile of school librarians may encourage an increase in the numbers of men applying for school librarian posts in schools, addressing the balance of a predominantly female profession, which is important in ensuring high quality staffing in boys' schools and in providing a positive role model to boys as readers and researchers.

16. The educational reform that has taken place in Qatar, presents opportunities for Qatar to lead in pan-Arab development concerning the role of school librarians, to develop school librarian leadership and a network of school librarians with links to international professional bodies and specialist bodies in other countries including IFLA, ALA and CILIP. In addition, the creation of a national professional organization with close links to the Qatar National Library will help to raise the profile of school librarians within a wider group of librarians. It is important that there is clear leadership in ensuring that practical action comes out of the various conferences or opportunities for discussion which do currently take place, and which tend to need identified staff to see through developments.

#### **7.4 Next Steps**

The following actions will be put in place as an outcome of the research undertaken and the recommendations:

- Meeting with the senior policy makers to discuss the findings and recommendation which will be used as a basis of a three year action plan to bring about changes to the training and development and role of school librarians within schools; setting up a national school librarians' association; explore budgets for school libraries; develop the professional standing and qualifications of school librarians so that they relate to those of teachers;

- Meeting with the Director of the National Library in Qatar to discuss the relation of the National Library to school libraries to develop a closer working relationship with school librarians;
- Organising a series of workshops for school librarians and school Principals to examine and develop the contribution of librarians to students' learning; developing the information literacy skills of students, particularly those preparing to go on to university either with Qatar or abroad;
- Translation of the thesis into Arabic to enable its access by Arabic speakers across the Gulf States;
- Publish a paper based on the research undertaken for publication in an international journal.

## **Chapter 8: RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the findings of this study be used to inform the decisions of policy makers and schools in relation to school libraries and provide a foundation for further research by policy makers. In addressing the questions of how we can create effective school libraries that contribute to raising students' levels of literacy, learning through supporting the curriculum, creating independent learners with the information literacy skills that will support them beyond school into further and higher education, this study directs recommendations towards a range of key stakeholders: to national policy makers in the form of the Institute of Education within the Supreme Education Council, to school principals who have the responsibility to make the most of the teaching and learning resources at their disposal to enable effective learners, to teachers who deliver the curriculum, and to library practitioners individually within schools and collectively as a profession.

The recommendations that arise from this study fall into eight key areas; they are also highlighted in terms of importance.

### **8.1 Changes to legislation by the Institute of Education of the Supreme Education Council**

- **Replace the 1992 School Libraries Act: High Importance: Phase 1:** It is strongly recommended that the Institute of Education replace the 1992 School Libraries Act with draft legislation which covers all schools within the remit of the Supreme Education Council, and that the Government enacts this legislation. The new Act should ensure the provision of a school library and qualified library staff in all schools and provision which reflects the development of digital technology. The Act should reflect international standards and guidance and should be published in Arabic and English.
  
- **Wider adoption of the new School Libraries Act within Qatar: High Importance: Phase 2:** The Supreme Education Council should consider encouraging all schools in Qatar that are outside its jurisdiction to adopt the new

Act on a voluntary basis where these schools do not have equivalent legislation or guidance from their own country. To facilitate this, it is suggested that the Institute of Education could aim to have the updated Act translated into the languages of these schools, where these are not Arabic or English.

## **8.2 Creation of a quality framework to support government goals for accountability**

- **School library standards: Medium Importance:** The Institute of Education should develop a set of standards for each area of school library provision, covering in particular the aspects of provision set out in the updated Act, to include: minimum requirements for qualified staff numbers; school library budget; library space; collection; electronic resources and evaluation.
- **Evaluation of service against standards: Medium Importance:** The Institute of Education should develop a clear but detailed framework to enable the evaluation of school library provision and activity against the expected standards. It is intended that this can help school principals, librarians and inspectors assess library contribution to the school and identify future improvements, and would be in line with the stated Institute of Education goal to “establish and monitor Independent Schools and develop criteria and requirements for school inspection and licensing” (IoE, webpage, n.d.).
- **Inclusion of library within the annual school report card: Medium Importance:** It is recommended that the school library and its contribution to supporting students’ learning should be more clearly embedded in the annual school report card. It is proposed that at the least there should be a summary indication of how effective provision is graded against the core areas of service laid down in the recommended school library standards. This would address the current situation where the annual school report card simply contains a yes/no indicator of whether the school has a library. This would make the contribution of the

library more transparent and would enable staff and parents to understand better the role of school libraries.

### 8.3 National school library policy, guidance and funding

- Building libraries into central national policy: **High Importance:** It is recommended that the contribution of libraries generally, and school libraries where appropriate, should be considered in the development of all national strategies and policies around education, culture and employment and actively included in the wording of any such vision and strategy documents. As school librarians are key players in the development of student literacies, this recommendation actively supports the national goal “to develop the spirit of independence and self reliance among students, which promotes research skills and self-directed learning” (QIoE website, n.d.).
- School Library Budget: **High Importance:** It is strongly recommended that a minimum level of annual budget should be specified within the overall school budget to support school library provision across the range of print and online resources and literacies activities, in line with the recommendations for the new School Libraries Act and with the responsibility of the Institute of Education to “provide finance to Independent Schools within the limits of their approved budget” (IoE, webpage, nd). By establishing a minimum threshold this would ensure that school libraries can plan for proper development year on year. However it is also recommended that school principals should take into account what additional funding should be budgeted to the school library in support of local school development priorities and learning initiatives. It is recommended that school librarians are accountable to the school principal for how this budget is used and that the librarian reports on this as part of the regular review and reporting process to school management and to parents.
- Creation of guidance resources: **Medium Importance:** The Institute of Education should develop a series of practical models or templates for school library strategy and policy statements which provide support and guidance to

school principals and librarians in order to ensure the achievement of high quality education standards. These will enable librarians to develop their own strategy and policy documents in line with their own school's goals and development plan. Exemplars and practical models could be made available on the Supreme Education Council website pages for schools, ensuring easy access. This recommendation is in line with the present stated commitment of the Institute of Education "to provide support and guidance to schools in order to ensure the achievement of high quality education standards" (IoE, webpage, n.d.).

- **Mapping exercise: Medium Importance:** The Institute of Education should work with librarians to create a map of how the school library contributes to student skills in each subject area of the national curriculum at each educational phase. This would serve to position the contribution of the school library at the heart of the curriculum and students' learning and would provide a framework for teachers and librarians together to get the most out of the resources and skills development at every stage of student learning. This mapping would fit very well with the stated Institute of Education goal to "develop curriculum standards and identify the competencies required for achieving quality at all educational stages in accordance with international approved benchmarks" (IoE, webpage, n.d.). This mapping approach is also relevant in supporting the building in of library contribution at the wider national strategy level (above).

#### **8.4 School librarian role and responsibility**

- **The school librarian as part of the school teaching team: High Importance:** The school librarian should be considered as part of the teaching staff of a school, dealing with strategic learning and teaching activities of the library, supported by a library assistant dealing with practical daily administration in the library. In line with this responsibility and understanding by teachers and the wider community, and as part of the national drive to raise recognition and value of

literacies including digital literacies, it is recommended that school librarians should be paid on the same scale as teachers.

- The school librarian as part of the school management team: **Medium Importance:** It is strongly recommended that the school librarian should have a permanent role on the school's senior management team, enabling them to make an active contribution to supporting the curriculum and literacies through the collection and teaching and to influence decisions about learning and the allocation of the school budget.
- The school librarian as developing practitioner: **Medium Importance:** It is recommended that school librarians should be encouraged to engage in continuous professional development. School librarians should therefore be included in each school's training and development planning for staff. It is suggested also that school principals consider how librarians might offer training to teaching colleagues, particularly in the areas of information literacy and reading development. It is recommended also if a National Association of Libraries is formed in Qatar that school librarians should be expected to sign up as members of this.

## 8.5 The role of the school library in developing lifelong learners

- Developing students as effective independent life-long learners: **High Importance:** it is recommended that school librarians collaborate with teaching colleagues in developing students' skills to become independent and self directed learners, to motivate students' literacy and creativity through e-learning and to meet the challenges of higher education university education and the labour market. It is proposed that this may be achieved by creating a structured programme of skills development across the school years, to be delivered in each educational phase, which builds into an assessed qualification of key skills in preparation for higher education. It is recommended that the broad framework of this programme build on the mapping exercise identified in

Recommendation 3 (above) and be worked out in collaboration between librarians, teachers and representatives from the university.

## 8.6 Developing the e-library: a resource for learning and teaching

- Developing the skills of librarians in the digital environment: High Importance:  
It is recommended that a skills audit of existing school librarians in using digital resources and the range of Web technologies including social networking tools is carried out to identify the priority areas for training and development. It is expected that librarians will need to make the best use of tools such as social networking and web-based information to complement the development and provision of digital resources which is seen as the future for Qatar education, providing schools with a full range of digital resources including the whole range of school curricula in both Arabic and English from kindergarten to year twelve.
- Using the network of school librarians to grow the e-library: High Importance:  
It is recommended that school librarians be encouraged to work together to identify online and digital resources which are reliable and easy to access and which encourage participation and interaction and are consistent with the standards of the national curriculum. It is important that the exciting resource created in the e-library continues to grow and to connect with the wide range of materials available in the online environment and with what is already available through the school library learning management system in order to continue to help enrich education in the State of Qatar beyond the immediate launch of the e-library, through the rich content of complex educational resources in one place which can be reached at any time, any place. This would support the continuation of the present goal to “provide an exciting learning environment that increases the students’ motivation and encourage them to be creative. To enable students to learn anytime anywhere” (QIoE website, n.d.).

## 8.7 Partnership, advocacy and development

- Convening of a National Association of Librarians: **High Importance:** It is recommended that a National Association of Librarians be convened as an umbrella organization comprising the Qatar National Library, university, public and specialist libraries within which an Association of School Librarians is part. This national association would give leadership in the advocacy of libraries and literacies within the Qatari national consciousness. It would provide opportunities for networking, discussion of key issues and looking beyond the local context to practice within the Gulf States and internationally. Developing partnerships and broadening horizons through organizing and attending international conferences is seen as crucial in positioning the National Association of Librarians of Qatar within an international context.
- Building a coordinated approach: **High Importance:** Effort should be made to create a coherent system where government departments, schools and a National Association of Librarians work in partnership to develop the role and the influence of school libraries in growing future citizens. This connects to recommendation 3 (above) advising the embedding of libraries into national vision and strategy documents, and is important for supporting the Institute of Education's goal to "increase the communication among the educational system parties" (QIoE website, n.d.).
- Developing library practitioners for the 21<sup>st</sup> century: **High Importance:** It is recommended that the newly-established Masters qualification in library and information science via the Hamad Bin Khalifa University UCL Department of Information Studies be promoted to school library practitioners and that this Department should also take on a key role in the continuing professional development (CPD) of librarians, including school librarians. This will provide an opportunity to ensure that specialist training is available locally in Qatar and also available to professional librarians in the Gulf States. It is also recommended that this Department should work in collaboration with a future Qatar National Association of Libraries in developing and delivering such

training. A further possibility would be for the Department of Information Studies to work in collaboration with the University of Qatar programmes in teacher training, to provide input to courses aimed at new teachers and at school principals in raising awareness of the value librarians and effective school libraries offer to the curriculum, student learning and the wider school community.

- Providing a professional practice collection: **High Importance:** it is recommended that the Qatar National Library maintain a collection of literature about school library development, including guidelines and advice books from key professional associations in other countries which could be lent to librarians in Qatar. If it is not practical to maintain a full collection of this material, it is recommended that the Qatar National Library work with the Institute of Education to maintain a webpage providing links to such material and organizations which could support school librarians in Qatar. This links with the spirit of the Institute of Education's goal for support of teachers: "to enable the teachers to teach in efficient and creative ways, by providing teaching methods that satisfy the needs and students' variety", (QIoE website, n.d.) and which it is suggested here should be extended to include school librarians also.
- Increasing the number of male librarians into the profession and into schools: **Medium Importance:** It is recommended that the Institute of Education carry out an advocacy campaign to promote better understanding of the importance of the role of the school librarian, in particular to help recruit men to take up posts in boys' schools. It is proposed that this advocacy campaign should be targeted at students in high schools and at university, to encourage them to take on training for a career as school librarian. If recommendation 4 (above) that school librarians should be paid on the same scale as teachers is adopted, this is likely to have a positive effect on recruitment of male Qatari librarians.
- Encouraging best practice: **Low Importance:** it is recommended that the Institute of Education create a School Librarian of the Year award, along the lines of the current Qatar Best School Award and the practitioner award run by the UK School Library Association. This award would provide the opportunity

for school principals, teachers, librarians and possibly also students to nominate outstanding school librarians and school libraries, and to bring to the attention of the education sector in Qatar examples of good practice and discussion of why these librarians and libraries are particularly effective.

## 8.8 Developing a research culture

- School librarians as researchers: **High Importance:** it is recommended that school librarians be encouraged to engage in local research studies, e.g. on aspects of student literacies, or carry out reflective case studies on particular initiatives or activities within individual schools or in clusters of schools. If a National Association of Libraries is established, such local research projects could be published by this body. Alternatively the Institute of Education could set up a project bank on its website, where librarians are encouraged to evaluate and share their projects. It is proposed that the Institute of Education could award a prize for the most interesting local research or case study each year by a librarian, or by a collaboration of librarians or by librarian and teachers – just as the Institute of Education currently recognizes student research projects.
- National research: **Medium Importance:** it is recommended that the Institute of Education commission and fund research into aspects of school library provision across Qatar on a regular, periodic basis. It is important that this research is published in a publicly available medium and that the implications are followed up at policy level.
- Expanding the current Qatar National Library research index: **Medium Importance:** it is recommended that the current hard-copy index system which logs books deposited by Qatari researchers and PhD research carried out by Qatari nationals should be converted to electronic format and expanded to include journal articles and other papers. It is recommended also that the Qatar National Library explore an open access repository to hold electronic copies of deposited research and publications about Qatar.

- Institute of Education website: **Medium Importance:** It is recommended that the website contain a section tab for research, where summaries of important studies from Qatar and internationally may be placed along with links to the research papers. It is proposed that this research tab could contain studies from all aspects of education, including school libraries, thus locating the school library firmly in the interest of educators generally rather than segregating the research for librarians only. This recommendation has relevance for the Institute of Education goal to “increase the communication among the educational system parties” (QIoE website, n.d.).

## **8.9 Further recommendations applicable more widely than the Qatar school library context**

- Arabic nations’ education index: **Low Importance:** It is recommended that ALESCO develop a strong and frequently updated bibliographic database focusing on education research and publication across the various nations of the Arabic speaking world, where teachers, librarians and policy makers can easily identify current research and can share good practice.

## **8.10 Future research recommendations**

- Longitudinal school library impact evaluation: **High Importance:** It is recommended that the Institute of Education set up an on-going research programme to evaluate the impact of school library provision and activities on students as independent learners. This could take the form of annual data collection to build trend patterns, and periodic investigations focused on specific aspects of school library impact, in particular investigating the relationship between student use of library resources and skills development and their wider academic progress.

- Evaluation of the e-library project: **Medium Importance:** It is recommended that a research study is conducted into the effect of the e-library initiative in relation to student learning, encompassing student literacies across information, reading and media skills. This research study should examine the relative effects of the digital resources and print resources in the different areas of independent learning and reading engagement, in order to understand better the effects of the different resource media for learning motivation, learning styles and achievement.

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## **APPENDIX 1: Research Instruments**

### **List of questions used to carry out semi-structured interviews**

**1. List of Interview Questions used to carry out semi-structured interviews with the following:**

**i. Named Authorities from the Ministry of Education comprising:**

- Minister of Education
- Under Secretary to the Minister of Education
- Assistant Under Secretary for Cultural Affairs
- Head of Department for the National Curriculum
- Director of the Department of School Libraries

**and also with**

- Director of School Libraries at the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development

**ii. Director of the Institute of Education (SEC)**

**iii. Principals of seven independent schools (SEC)**

**iv. Librarians of seven independent Schools (SEC)**

**1.i.      Interview Questions to named Authorities from the Ministry of Education**  
**(2005)**

- Q1: How would you assess the condition of school libraries in Qatar?
- Q2: In your opinion, what are the main obstacles facing school libraries in Qatar?
- Q3: How would you rate the current funding allocated to school libraries?
- Q4: How would you evaluate the role of the school library in supporting the school curriculum?
- Q5: Do you think that establishing a school library network is viable at this stage of time?
- Q6: How do you find school libraries adapting to the new information technology?
- Q7: In what way could the current status of school library personnel be improved?
- Q8: In your opinion, how would school libraries overcome the lack of qualified librarians?
- Q9: What is your conception about the role of school libraries serving the outside community?
- Q10: What are the future plans, if any, for developing school libraries?

**1.ii. Interview Questions for Director of the Institute of Education in the Supreme Council of Education (SEC):Sabah Al-Haydoos**  
**(2007)**

Q1: In the light of the developments taking place in education in Qatar, how would you evaluate the role of school libraries (Learning Resource Centers)?

Q2: Where do school libraries fit in the independent education system?

Q3: Are there any regulations or laws issued for Learning Resource Centers by the Supreme council of Education?

Q4: What are the knowledge and skills that information specialists should acquire in the new learning environment?

Q5: Are there plans regarding the needs of Learning Resource Centers specialists in the next five years?

Q6: Are there any plans to network the independent schools in the future and how can cooperation between Learning Resource Centres attached to them be activated?

### **1.iii. Interview Questions for Principals of Independent Schools**

**(2007)**

Q1- Where does the Learning Resource Centre (School libraries) fit in the organizational structure of your school?

Q2- How can we activate the role of the Learning Resource Centre in supporting the curriculum?

Q3- Are there criteria and standards for recruiting Learning Resource Centers specialists?

Q4- What is the role to be played by the Learning Resource Centre in serving the school community as well as the society at large?

Q5- Is there an independent budget to these Centers?

**1.iv. Interview Questions for Librarians of Independent Schools**  
**(2007)**

Q1: Do you feel you have job security as a librarian in an Independent School?

Q2: How satisfied are you with your salary and other benefits?

Q3: What type of technical services are carried out in the learning resource centre?

Q4: What type of information services provided to both the teachers and students?

Q5: How are the resources in the Learning Resource Centre used to support the curriculum?

Q6: Is there any sort of collaboration between you and school teachers?

Q7: What kind of activities do you carry out within the school?

Q8: Is there an information literacy programme offered in the school?

## **APPENDIX 2:**

### **Research Instruments (Questionnaires with Summary Data)**

- 2. Research Instruments: Questionnaires with summary data from following:**
  - i. **School librarians (Pilot)**
  - ii. **School librarians (2004)**
  - iii. **School Students (Ministry of Education Schools) (2006)**
  - iv. **Community survey: Questionnaire sent to parents with children aged 7-15 years**
  - v. **Questionnaire to Qatari students in Higher Education in the UK and Ireland**
  - vi. **Questionnaires to lecturers and librarians from the University of Qatar**

## **2.i. Pilot Questionnaire to School Librarians**

**N=40 (40 distributed) (2004)**

<b>Question</b>	Summary of Responses given in %		
<b>School Type</b>	Primary: 35%	Intermediate: 32.5%	Secondary: 32.5%
Q1: Do you think that the collections held within the school library are relevant to the school curriculum?	Yes: 82.5% No: 15.5%		
Q2: How many books does your school library hold?	<i>Number of books (average no)</i>	Primary: 1677	Intermediate: 2688 Secondary: 3900
a. Does your school library hold other resources which are made available to the students? Please describe these.	<i>Books available for loan or reference</i>	Books for loan: 97.5%	Books for reference: 2.5%
b. Does your resource collection meet the needs and ability level of your students?	<i>Reference facilities available</i>	Yes for loan: 7.5%	Yes for reference only: 90% None available: 2.5%
	<i>Magazines available for reference or loan</i>	Yes for loan: 35%	Yes for reference only: 65% None available: 0%
	<i>Newspapers available for reference or loan</i>	Yes for loan: 7.5%	Yes for reference only: 37.5% None available: 55.0%
	<i>Other materials available for reference or loan</i>	Yes for loan: 2.5%	Yes for reference only: 10.0% None available: 87.5%
	<i>Audio cassettes available for reference or loan</i>	Yes for loan: 15.0%	Yes for reference only: 42.5% None available: 42.5%
	<i>Photocopier available</i>	Yes: 90%	No: 10%
	<i>TV available</i>	Yes: 95%	No: 5%
	<i>OHP available</i>	Yes: 77.5%	No: 22.5%

	<i>Listening station available</i>	Yes: 82.5%		No: 17.5%	
	<i>Computers available</i>	Yes: 62.5%		No: 37.5%	
	<i>Computing facilities offered</i>	CD Rom		Yes: 25%	No: 75%
		Database spreadsheets		Yes: 5%	No: 95%
		Internet		Yes: 7.5%	No: 92.5%
		On-line services		Yes: 5%	No: 95%
		Word processing		Yes: 5%	No: 95%
	Other computing services		Yes: 2.5%		No: 95%
Q2b: Does your resource collection meet the needs and ability level of your students?	Less than 25%: 9.4%	Between 25-50%: 15.6%		Between 50-75% 75%	75% +: 0%
Q3: What qualification do you hold? Do you have a library specific qualification?	<i>Position held</i>	Full time librarian: 48.3%		Part time librarian/teacher librarian: 3.4%	
	<i>Qualified (holding certificate in librarianship)</i>	Qualified: 51.7%		Not qualified: 48.3%	
Q4: Are you satisfied with the salary that you are paid and your job prospects?	Satisfied: 32 %                      Not Satisfied: 68 %				
Q5: Could you describe the size, location and suitability of your school library in meeting the learning needs of the students?	<i>Location of library</i>		Ground floor: 55%		First floor: 35%
	<i>Size: is library big enough?</i>			Yes: 75%	No: 25%
	<i>Library space meets needs of library users</i>	Excellent: 42%	Very good: 36.4%	Good: 21.2%	Satisfactory: 0%
	<i>Library furniture meets user needs</i>	Excellent: 28.6%	Very good: 40%	Good: 31.4%	Satisfactory: 0%
	<i>Library lighting meets user needs</i>	Excellent: 32.4%	Very good: 35.3%	Good: 32.4%	Satisfactory: 0%
	<i>Library used for leisure reading</i>	Yes: 12.5%			No: 87.5%

	<i>Library used for homework</i>	Yes: 7.5%		No: 92.5%
	<i>Library used for research</i>	Yes: 92.5%		No: 5%
	<i>Library used for watching films</i>	Yes: 2.5%		No: 97.5%
	<i>Is library used for classroom sessions?</i>	Yes: 92.5%		No: 7.5%
	<i>If in use, can students access the library?</i>	Yes: 75%	No: 22.5%	Don't know: 2.5%
Q6: What times of the day can students access the school library?	Saturday (full school day)	100%		
	Sunday (full school day)	100%		
	Monday (full school day)	100%		
	Tuesday (full school day)	100%		
	Wednesday (full school day)	100%		
	Thursday (weekend)	closed		
	Friday (weekend)	closed		
	During class time	45%		
	During lunch time	32%		
	After school hours	12.5%		
Q7: What system of cataloguing do you use?	<i>Is there a classification system in the library?</i>			Yes: 87.5% No: 12.5%
	<i>Dewey system used?</i>	Yes: 85%	No: 7.5%	Other: 7.5%
	<i>Cataloguing system available to help students find resources?</i>			Yes: 87.5% No: 12.5%
Q8: What types of things do you use to publicise the school library and its resources?	<i>Provide guidance materials, posters and leaflets to publicise the library</i>			Yes: 67.5% No: 32.5%
Q9: How often does the Library School High Committee meet?	<i>never</i>			12.5%
	<i>1-4 times a year</i>			77.5%
	<i>5 or more time a year</i>			10%
Q10: How is your school library funded?	<i>Ministry of Education</i>			100%
	<i>Donations from other sources such as parents</i>			2.5%

## **2.ii. National survey of Librarians in Qatar School Libraries**

**N= 150 (200 distributed) (2004)**

This questionnaire is part of a research study on school libraries in Qatar.  
Please answer all questions as fully as possible

- 1- Tick the box next to statement that suits your situation:
- a) I am a full time librarian (librarian duty only) 95%
  - b) I am a part-time librarian (Teacher librarian) 5%
- 2- Please tick the box to the statement that match you situation:
- a) I am a qualified (Holding certificate in Librarianship) 23.3%
  - b) I am unqualified (Other qualification) 60.0%
  - c) I am unqualified (Secondary School Certificate only) 2.7%
  - d) No comment 14.0%
- 3- What type of school are you working with?
- a) Primary 36.6%
  - b) Intermediate 22.4%
  - c) Secondary 20.7%
  - d) Combined 10.0%
  - e) Model 10.3%
- 4- How many pupils are there in the school? 561 (mean) Min= 435; Max= 725
- 5- What is pupils' gender in the school you work in?
- a) Boys 44.55%
  - b) Girls 55.45%
- 6- How often does the School Higher committee (SHC) meet?  
(SHC consist of Principal, Teachers, Librarian)
- a) Never 45.0%
  - b) Once a year 34.6%
  - c) Twice a year 12.8%
  - d) Three per year 7.4%
  - e) More than three per year (give details) 0.2%
- 
-

7- How much of your library funds come from each of the following sources?  
(Please specify the percentage of each)

- |    |                                   |      |
|----|-----------------------------------|------|
| a) | The Ministry of Education         | 98 % |
| b) | Donations                         | 2 %  |
| c) | Any other source – Please specify | 0 %  |
- 

8- When is the library open to the pupils & staff?  
(Please tick all relevant boxes)

- a) **Days (school week)**
- |           |                               |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Sunday    | 100% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Monday    | 100% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tuesday   | 100% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wednesday | 100% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Thursday  | 100% <input type="checkbox"/> |
- b) **Hours per day**
- |                       |                                |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Lunchtime only        | 4.8% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 45 minutes – 2 hours  | 3.2% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 2 – 4 hours           | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| Full school day       | 90.0% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Outside of school day | 2% <input type="checkbox"/>    |

9- Is the Library used for class sessions?

- |    |  |                                 |
|----|--|---------------------------------|
| a) | Not used                                 | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| b) | Used for introduction to research skills | 25.6% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| c) | Used for subject-related study           | 24.83% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) | Yes – for leisure                        | 20.89% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) | Yes – for homework                       | 28.68% <input type="checkbox"/> |

10- If the library is used for class sessions, can individual students use it/ use the library at the same time?

- |    |     |                              |
|----|-----|------------------------------|
| a) | Yes | 40% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) | No  | 60% <input type="checkbox"/> |

11- Where is the library located within the school?

- |    |                                 |                                |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a) | Ground floor                    | 78.5% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) | First floor                     | 21.5% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) | Somewhere else – please specify | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>    |
- 

12- What size is of your library?

- |    |                              |                                |
|----|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a) | Up to 50 sq. meters          | 47.3% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) | Between 51 – 100 sq. meters  | 21.3% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) | Between 101 – 150 sq. meters | 17.3% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) | Over 200 sq. meter           | 14.1% <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 13- How do you organize the books on your library's shelves?
- |  |                  |                          |
|--|------------------|--------------------------|
| a) By size of books                    | 0%               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) By broad subject category           | 4%               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) By Dewey classification             | 90%              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) By some other way – please describe | 6% (unspecified) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- 
- 

- 14- What kind of catalogue of library resources does the library have for students and staff to use to find resources?
- |                             |     |                          |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| a) No catalogue             | 37% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Access card              | 0%  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Card catalogue           | 63% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Computer-based catalogue | 0%  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 15- Which of the following guidance aids do the library have to tell the students and staff about how to use the library?
- |                            |     |                          |
|----------------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| a) Posters                 | 13% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Guidance leaflets       | 10% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Shelving bay headers    | 77% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Shelf labels            | 0%  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other – please describe | 0%  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- 

- 16- What materials are available in the library?
- |                           | For Loan                      | For use in library             | None Available               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) Reference materials    | 3.7% <input type="checkbox"/> | 96.3% <input type="checkbox"/> | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| b) Magazines              | 30% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 70% <input type="checkbox"/>   | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| c) Books                  | 100% <input type="checkbox"/> | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>    | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| d) Newspapers             | 5% <input type="checkbox"/>   | 95% <input type="checkbox"/>   | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| e) Audio cassettes        | 13% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 55% <input type="checkbox"/>   | 32% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Other (please specify) | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>   | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>    | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  |
- 

- 17- What use is made of the following services in the library?
- |                       | Don't have                   | Librarian only               | Pupils                       | Teachers                     | Admin.                      |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a) Audio cassettes    | 46% <input type="checkbox"/> | 30% <input type="checkbox"/> | 19% <input type="checkbox"/> | 5% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 0% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Photocopier        | 15% <input type="checkbox"/> | 85% <input type="checkbox"/> | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 0% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) TV                 | 5% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 40% <input type="checkbox"/> | 47% <input type="checkbox"/> | 8% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 0% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Listening services | 16% <input type="checkbox"/> | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>  | 70% <input type="checkbox"/> | 14% <input type="checkbox"/> | 0% <input type="checkbox"/> |

18- If you have computers in the library what use is made of the following resources?

	Don't have	Librarian only	Pupils	Teachers	Admin.					
a) CD Rom	90%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	10%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Internet	98%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 %	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Online services	100%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Word processing	96%	<input type="checkbox"/>	4%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Database spreadsheet	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>

19- How many resources do you have in the library collection?

a)	Under 1000	1.3%	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	1001 – 2000	11.3%	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	2001 – 3000	14.6%	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Over 3000	63.3%	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Do not know	9.5%	<input type="checkbox"/>

20- How far does your resource collection meet the needs intended and ability level of your students provide a scale (e.g. 100% match)

a)	20% - 25%	0.6%	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	25% - 50%	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	50% - 75%	0%	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	75% - 100%	64.6%	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Do not know	34.8%	<input type="checkbox"/>

21- If you feel the match is less than 50% please tick all the reasons that apply:

a)	Materials are too difficult for the students	23%	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Material is not attractive to the students	19%	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Material does not match curriculum subjects	34%	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Balance of collection is over weighted to a few subject areas	8%	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Insufficient quality of materials	16%	<input type="checkbox"/>
f)	Other, please describe	<i>No comments</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	

22- How far does each of the following meet the needs of library users?

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
a) Overall space	0% <input type="checkbox"/>	27% <input type="checkbox"/>	67% <input type="checkbox"/>	6% <input type="checkbox"/>
b) Furniture	2% <input type="checkbox"/>	76% <input type="checkbox"/>	22% <input type="checkbox"/>	0% <input type="checkbox"/>
c) Lighting	0% <input type="checkbox"/>	53% <input type="checkbox"/>	46% <input type="checkbox"/>	1% <input type="checkbox"/>

23- What aspect of your library's environment would you most like to improve?

*Location; size of the library; new furniture; shelving* \_\_\_\_\_

- 24- For which of the following purposes is your library used? (Please tick all relevant options)
- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| a) The library is used only for leisure reading                          | 20.89% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) The library is used as space where homework is done                   | 28.68% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) The library is used as a place of research for homework               | 28.70% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) The library is not used at all by students                            | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| e) The library is used by students during class time                     | 37% <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| f) The library is used by students during lunch time                     | 28.12% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) The library is used by students before or after school hours          | 12 % <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| h) The library is used for watching entertaining films <i>only</i>       | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| i) The library is used for membership <i>only</i>                        | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| j) The library is used for internet purposes <i>only</i>                 | 0% <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| k) The library is used as a venue for other purposes<br>(please specify) | 2.61% <input type="checkbox"/>  |

*Meetings; interviews; presentations to parents* \_\_\_\_\_

---

- 25- Indicate these areas where you see greater need for development (tick all relevant)
- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| a) Increasing library staff                                    | 64% <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| b) Improving librarians skills                                 | 76% <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| c) Increasing school administration support for library access | 51.3% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Collections relevant to curriculum                          | 65.3% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Developing library's role in student learning skills        | 72.7% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Cooperation between librarian and teaching staff            | 80.7% <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Developing library role in exporting ICT in the coursework  | 92.7% <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 26- Please add any other comments you wish
- 

Your school's name:

---

This is optional but it would be helpful to me in case I wish to follow up any points you have made.

**Thank you for your help in completing this survey**

**Please return this questionnaire to The School Library Section at the  
Ministry of Education by Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2004**

**2.iii. Questionnaire: Survey of school students (Ministry of Education Schools)**

**N=110 (130 circulated) (2006)**

**Questionnaire: Survey of school students (Ministry of Education Schools)**

*Dear Student could I please ask you to fill in this questionnaire which explores how students use their school library. This questionnaire is anonymous- you do not need to give your name- only your views. Thank You for your help*

<b>Name of School:</b>
<b>Boy / Girl (Please circle )</b>
<b>Please name the subject which you prefer to study after school:</b>

**Please read these statements and tick the box which most closely reflect your experience**

<b>1. I use the school library for:</b>	At least once a day	At least once a week	At least once a month	At least once a term	Never	Don't know	No response	Total
Class lessons for subject study	25	23	17	29	12	3	1	110
Class lessons in how to do research and library skills	17	25	30	21	13	4	0	110
Homework	20	18	14	19	35	3	1	110
Leisure	41	22	15	10	16	3	3	110

Anything else? (please write here) .....

<b>2. I use these library resources:</b>	At least once a day	At least once a week	At least once a month	At least once a term	Never	Don't know	No response	Total
Information books	18	30	23	17	14	7	1	110
Novels	39	21	19	15	10	5	1	110
Audio visual resources	13	24	28	15	25	4	1	110
Newspapers or periodicals	34	24	16	18	14	2	1	110
Library catalogue	13	26	19	23	24	4	1	110
Online databases and resources	11	17	31	24	20	7	0	110

Other resources I use in the school library .....

<b>3. I use the internet in the school library for:</b>	At least once a day	At least once a week	At least once a month	At least once a term	Never	Don't know	No response	Total
Finding out subject information	22	4	3	2	2	77	0	110
Finding out information for leisure interest	11	12	5	4	3	75	0	110
Playing games	10	8	3	4	5	80	0	110
Chatting	7	6	6	3	10	78	0	110
Sending and checking emails	10	4	4	6	11	75	0	110

Other reasons I use the internet in the school library .....

<b>4. I think the school librarian ...</b>	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know	No response	Total
is there to keep the resources in order	80	16	8	5	1	110
Is there to teach research skills	33	33	21	22	1	110
Recommends books for me to read	57	18	23	12	0	110
Puts up displays in the library	72	18	11	8	1	110
Is too busy to help me	28	21	56	4	1	110
Is often involved with classes, assemblies and events throughout the school	22	38	39	10	1	110
Helps me find what I need	71	13	19	6	1	110
Makes me feel welcome in the library	67	17	19	6	1	110
Helps me with research and library skills	59	22	23	5	1	110
Is very strict with students	60	19	21	9	1	110
Runs a library newsletter	59	30	10	10	1	110
Is not involved very much in the rest of the school community	37	31	33	8	1	110
Puts on library competitions and activities	63	23	13	10	1	110
Helps me to use the library catalogue	58	20	20	11	1	110

Other comment about my school librarian .....

<b>4. I think the school library ...</b>	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know	No response	Total
Is a pleasant place to study	66	19	17	7	1	110
Has enough tables for me to work at	57	18	29	5	1	110
Has enough novels and leisure resources	58	15	28	8	1	110
Is a good place to meet up with friends	61	13	31	4	1	110
Is in an easy-to-reach place within the school	59	9	29	8	5	110
Is open whenever I need it	71	10	19	9	1	110
Is a quiet place	22	14	64	9	1	110
Is a good place to have lunch	17	14	68	10	1	110
Looks boring	56	18	23	12	1	110
Has enough subject information resources for my studies	54	22	23	10	1	110
Helps me to know what kind of research skills I will need for the future	37	27	35	10	1	110

Other comment about my experience of the school library .....

### **5. What else would you want from your school library and school librarian?**

*Thank you for completing this questionnaire*

## 2.iv. Community Survey: Parents with Children aged 7-15 years

**N=64 (70 distributed) (2008)**

### Background Information

My school age child is	A boy: 39	A girl 25
Age of my child	Range: 6-16 years; Average age: 10.3 years	

*Please tick in the relevant box to show whether you agree, disagree or don't know in response to each of the statements below. Thank you in advance for your help in completing this questionnaire.*

	Statement	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Don't know
1	My child's school has a librarian	56	0	0	8
2	My child can use the internet in the school library to help them with their homework	25	10	15	14
3	Schools do not need specialist school librarians- teachers can provide all the support pupils need	6	6	52	1
4	Our family often buys book for the children to read at home	50	12	1	1
5	My child never uses the school library	2	12	40	9
6	My child brings home books from the school library to help them do their homework	31	12	16	5
7	My child receives study skills lessons at school which involve the library	36	8	11	9
8	My child uses a public library out of school	12	19	35	4
9	I don't think that school libraries particularly help children to learn	6	11	35	2
10	My child's school library has a large selection of regularly updated books	25	12	7	20
11	My child always talks positively about the school library	25	14	13	12
12	I don't need to know about my child's school library- that's a matter for the teachers	7	11	45	4
13	When students go to University they will need to use the library there to help them with their studies	63	0	0	1
14	My child brings home books from the school library to read for pleasure	32	6	23	3
15	My children's teachers have shown me the school library	12	12	33	7
16	My children use the school library at least once a week	19	14	10	31
17	I think that school librarians should have specialist qualifications equivalent to teaching qualifications	58	3	1	2
18	My child uses the internet at home	53	5	6	0
19	I think it is important that all children use the school library	62	2	0	0
20	I am very happy with my child's school library	37	16	4	7

## **2.v. Questionnaire to Qatari students in Higher Education in the UK and Ireland**

**N=75 (240 distributed) (2006)**

### **Questionnaire to Qatari students in Higher Education in the UK and Ireland**

*Dear Student, could I please ask you to complete the following questionnaire that examines students' experience of using libraries to support their study. Thank you*

#### **1- What is your programme of study / subject/ degree level?**

---

#### **2- How did you use the library at your school in Qatar?**

- |                                    |                          |     |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| - I did not use the school library | <input type="checkbox"/> | 39% |
| - Class research skills            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 25% |
| - Subject study                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 23% |
| - Leisure                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16% |
| - Homework                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10% |

#### **3- What libraries do you use in the UK?**

- |                                       |                          |       |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| a. University Library                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 97.5% |
| b. Public Library                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14%   |
| c. Department Library                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11.5% |
| d. Not using Library                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2.5%  |
| e. Any other library (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0%    |

---

#### **4- How do you use the University libraries in the UK?**

- |   |                          |     |
|---|--------------------------|-----|
| a. For library research skills inductions | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20% |
| b. For researching for subject assignment | <input type="checkbox"/> | 68% |
| c. As space for private study             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 32% |
| d. For leisure                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5%  |

#### **5- What types of resources are you using for your studies?**

- |                              |                          |       |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| a. Books                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 90%   |
| b. Periodicals (Paper based) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 29%   |
| c. Periodicals (Electronic)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 42%   |
| d. Online database           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 46.7% |
| e. Internet                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 75%   |
| f. Catalogues- electronic    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13%   |

- g. Catalogues- Others       8%  
h. Subject guides       3%  
i. Other resources (please specify)       1%

**6- How often do you use the library?**

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**7- What difficulties are you facing with in using the library for your studies in UK?**

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**8- a) How far do you feel that your library experiences at school prepared you for studying at the higher education level?**

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**b) Explain what you feel school libraries could do to improve students' university experience?**

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*Thank for help in completing this Questionnaire*

**2.vi. Questionnaire to Lecturers and Librarians from the University**  
**of Qatar**

**Lecturers: N=15 (16 distributed) (2007)**

**Librarians: N=10 (15 distributed) (2007)**

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Q1: In your opinion how would you evaluate first year students' library skills?

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Q2: How would you rate first year students' abilities in doing independent research?

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Q3: How would you assess the new intakes motivations to use the library for their academic work?

---

Q4: What are the main limitations in students' library and research ability?

---

Q5: What do new students need in order to overcome these limitations?

---

Q6: Are students required to undertake library skills course as a part of their first year studies?

---

Q7: How do you feel that school libraries may be able to contribute to preparing students for independent research at university level?

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Q8: In your experience is there any perceptible difference in first year university students' independent research skills between students from Qatari State's schools and students from none-Qatari schools?

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### APPENDIX 3

#### Qatar Library Staff by Qualification (2012-13) [in Arabic]

مسلسل	مكان العمل	مسمى الوظيفة	المستوى العلمي	المؤهل العلمي	التخصص	تاريخ الحصول على المؤهل
1	الشمال الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	اعلام	15/07/2009
2	القاسمية النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	اعلام	11/07/2007
3	الخور الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	اعلام	01/01/2006
4	الموارد البشرية	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	اجتماع	01/06/1992
5	آمنة محمود الجيد الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	اجتماع	09/02/1994
6	الموارد البشرية	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	اجتماع	01/06/1991
7	روضة راشد الابتدائية الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	اجتماع	01/06/1992
8	ابن سينا النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	اجتماع	26/02/1998
9	علي بن أبي طالب الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس ادب	اداب	30/05/1984
10	مصعب بن عمر الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس ادب	اداب	12/06/1985
11	أسامة بن زيد الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس ادب	اداب	15/06/1993
12	أم العم الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	اداب	06/04/2005
13	الشحانية النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	اداب	25/01/2010
14	القاسمية النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	اداب	19/06/2005
15	رفيدة بنت كعب الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	اداب	11/07/2007
16	صلاح الدين الأيوبي الإعدادية المستقلة	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس	اداب	03/08/2003
17	بلال بن رياح النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	ادارة معلومات	08/02/2006
18	الشحانية النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	ادارة مكاتب	20/08/2007
19	الوفاء النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس ادب و تربية	اساليب تدريس	31/08/2004
20	الموارد البشرية	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس شرعية و دراسات اسلامية	أصول دين	01/01/1987
21	قطر الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس شرعية و دراسات اسلامية	أصول دين	01/01/1993
22	مسعود الابتدائية الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس شرعية و دراسات اسلامية	أصول دين	01/06/1992
23	زبيدة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	اعمال مكتبة	09/07/2008
24	مسعود الابتدائية الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	ثانوي	الثانوية العامة	الادب الفرنسي الحديث	01/10/1987
25	مجمع التربية السمعية للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	ثانوي	دبلوم التاهيل المهني	التربية السمعية الخاصة	01/07/2000
26	عبد الله بن زيد آل محمد النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	الاجازة في الاداب	الدراسات العربية	01/08/2008
27	بروق الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم		بكالوريوس ادب نظم	برمجة وتحليل	01/01/2009
28	الموارد البشرية	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس علوم و تربية	بيولوجيا	27/06/1996
29	الإسراء الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس علوم و تربية	بيولوجيا	26/06/2000
30	الخوارزمي الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس علوم و تربية	بيولوجيا	26/06/2000
31	الموارد البشرية	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	تاريخ	01/01/1984

01/01/1983	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	32
01/10/1984	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	33
01/01/1986	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	34
01/01/1984	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	35
04/06/1984	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	سعد بن ابي واقاص النموذجية المستقلة	36
01/01/1985	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	37
27/09/1991	تاريخ	ليسانس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	38
01/01/1984	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	39
01/01/1987	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	40
		بكالوريوس ادب				
01/01/1985	تاريخ	وتنمية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	النهضة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	41
03/10/2000	تاريخ	ليسانس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	برزان الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	42
22/10/1996	تاريخ	ليسانس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الشمال الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	43
07/03/1996	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	44
27/06/1998	تاريخ	وتنمية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	45
08/10/1999	تاريخ	ليسانس ادب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	46
03/03/1999	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	47
28/11/1998	تاريخ	ليسانس ادب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	48
13/02/1995	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	49
28/11/1995	تاريخ	ليسانس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	50
02/12/2000	تاريخ	ليسانس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الشمال الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	51
15/06/1994	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	52
22/06/1995	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	53
15/06/1994	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	سمية الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	54
13/02/1995	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أبي حنيفة النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	55
15/06/1994	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	سكنة بنت الحسين الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	56
22/06/1995	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الظاعن الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	57
13/02/1995	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	58
15/06/1994	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الذخيرة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	59
07/03/1996	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الرشاد النموذجية المستقلة	60
03/03/1999	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الخور الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	61
15/06/2002	تاريخ	وتنمية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	62
06/04/2005	تاريخ	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	المثنى بن حارثة النموذجية المستقلة	63
22/02/2003	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أم إيمان الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	64
					فاطمة بنت الوليد بن المغيرة الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	
06/04/2005	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب		مسؤولة مصادر التعلم		65
06/03/2006	تاريخ	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أبي حنيفة النموذجية المستقلة للبنات	66
01/01/2010	تاريخ	بكالوريوس ادب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	مجمع التربية السمعية للبنات	67
09/03/2010	تاريخ			مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الرشاد النموذجية المستقلة	68
01/01/1994	تنمية/آخزف	بكالوريوس تربية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الوكرة الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	69
01/02/2005	تقنيات التعليم	ماجستير	ماجستير	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الوكرة الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	70
01/05/1997	تكنولوجيا ومعلومات الحاسب	دبلوم الدراسات العليا		مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الغشامية الابتدائية المستقلة للبنين	71

	ثانوي تربوي	الثانوية العامة	ثانوي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	جو عن بن جاسم النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	72
27/06/1996	جغرافيا	بكالوريوس اداب وتربيه	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	73
26/06/2000	حاسب آلي	بكالوريوس علوم	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الشحانية الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	74
26/06/2000	رياضيات	الثانوية العامة	ثانوي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الشحانية الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	75
01/06/1992	أصول دين / شريعة / اصول دين	بكالوريوس شريعة و دراسات اسلامية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	التعاون الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	76
01/06/1992	أصول دين / شريعة / اصول دين	بكالوريوس شريعة و دراسات اسلامية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	77
01/01/1991	أصول دين / شريعة / اصول دين	بكالوريوس شريعة و دراسات اسلامية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	مالك بن انس النموذجية المستقلة	78
01/06/1991	أصول دين / شريعة / اصول دين	بكالوريوس شريعة و دراسات اسلامية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	79
01/06/1993	أصول دين / شريعة / اصول دين	بكالوريوس شريعة و دراسات اسلامية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أم هاني الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	80
01/01/1989	اسلامية / شريعة اسلامية	بكالوريوس شريعة و دراسات اسلامية	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	81
14/05/1983	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	ماجستير	ماجستير	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	أحمد بن محمد الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	82
24/06/2001	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	المنتزة النموذجية المستقلة	83
10/12/1991	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	الاجازة في الاداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الإمام الشافعى الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين	84
22/02/2003	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الكورثر الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	85
10/03/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	مريم بنت عمران الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	86
22/02/2003	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أم العبد الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	87
23/02/2004	علم المعلومات والمكتبات		جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	السلام الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	88
31/01/2004	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	سميسمة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنين	89
15/06/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أم هاني الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	90
10/03/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الوسيل النموذجية المستقلة	91
15/06/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	92
15/06/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	93
22/06/1995	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	الدبلوم العامة	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	أبو بكر الصديق الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين	94
15/06/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أم معبد الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	95
15/06/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الكعبان الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	96
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10/03/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	99
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31/05/2001	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	عبدالله بن علي المسند الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة	103
06/04/2005	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الخليج العربي النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	104
22/02/2003	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	أم ايمن الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	105
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22/02/2003	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الموارد البشرية	109
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15/06/2002	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	المعهد الديني الإعدادي الثانوي المستقل بنين	114
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17/06/2003	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	آمنة بنت وهب الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	126
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08/06/2004	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	برق الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	130
08/06/2004	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	آمنة بنت وهب الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	131

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17/06/2003	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الريان الجديد الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	133
08/06/2004	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	أم القرى النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	134
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01/01/2007	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	عبد الله بن تركي السبيعي النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	136
01/07/2009	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الوكير النموذجية المستقلة	137
08/04/2007	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الوكير النموذجية المستقلة	138
19/06/2005	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الإيمان الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	139
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04/10/2007	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	التعاون الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	141
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05/04/2005	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	أم القرى النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	143
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22/03/2009	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	عاشرة بنت أبي بكر الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	179
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22/03/2009	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب		مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الوجبة الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	181
24/01/2011	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	قطر الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	182
22/03/2009	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	أم معبد الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	183
22/03/2009	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	السلام الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	184
01/07/2009	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	الجازة		مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	الإخلاص النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	185
20/03/2008	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	عثمان بن عفان النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	186
01/01/2009	علم المعلومات والمكتبات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	غرنطة الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	187
02/05/2003	علوم حاسب	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	خديجة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	188
15/07/2008	علوم حاسب	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	آمنة بنت وهب الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	189
25/03/2001	فيزياء	بكالوريوس علوم و تربية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	النهضة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	190
24/06/2001	فيزياء	بكالوريوس علوم و تربية	جامعي	مسؤولة مصادر التعلم	موزة بنت محمد الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	191

192	رابعة العدوية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات الخوارزمي الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس علوم و تربية	كيمياء	01/01/1992
193	الإسراء الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة انجليزية	03/03/1999
194	الإسراء الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة انجليزية	10/03/2002
195	سعود بن عبدالرحمن النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة انجليزية	15/06/2002
196	الموارد البشرية	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	01/01/1988
197	عمر بن الخطاب الابتدائية الثانية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	01/06/1992
198	رابعة العدوية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس تربية	لغة عربية	22/06/1995
199	أم صلال على النموذجية المستقلة	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس ادب	لغة عربية	10/12/1997
200	موزة بنت محمد الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	30/06/1999
201	الفلاح الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	01/07/1999
202	أم ايمن الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس تربية	لغة عربية	27/06/1996
203	ذكريت الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	لغة عربية	01/07/1996
204	الوسائل النموذجية المستقلة	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	30/06/1999
205	أم صلال على النموذجية المستقلة	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	30/06/1999
206	الرسالة الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	30/06/1999
207	الكونثرا الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	30/06/1999
208	أروى بنت عبدالمطلب الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	26/06/2000
209	الشمال الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	لغة عربية	24/06/2001
210	أروى بنت عبدالمطلب الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب و تربية	لغة عربية	22/02/2003
211	الدوحة الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس	لغه فرنسيه	09/07/1991
212	الموارد البشرية	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادارة و اقتصاد	محاسبة	07/03/1996
213	ابن سينا النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادارة و اقتصاد	محاسبة	27/06/1996
214	عبد الرحمن بن جاسم الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	مكتبات	
215	حطين النموذجية المستقلة	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس ادب	مكتبات	01/01/1984
216	خالد بن أحمد الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	مكتبات	15/11/2000
217	الشحانية الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	مكتبات	30/10/2000
218	عبد الله بن علي المسند الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس	مكتبات	31/05/1999
219	قطر للعلوم المصرية وإدارة الاعمال الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	الاجازة	مكتبات	14/09/1995
220	دخان الابتدائية الإعدادية الثانوية المستقلة للبنات	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس ادب	مكتبات	26/05/2000
221	القدس النموذجية المستقلة	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	الاجازة (ليسانس)	مكتبات	27/01/2002
222	السليمة الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ليسانس ادب	مكتبات	20/05/2002
223	الأندلس النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	بكالوريوس	مكتبات	01/07/2005
224	أحمد بن حنبل الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	جامعي	ماجستير	مكتبات مدرسية ومدارس التعليم	24/09/2006

13/08/2000	مكتبات مدرسية ومصادر التعليم	ليسانس اداب و تربية		مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جاسم بن حمد الثانوية المستقلة للبنين 225
30/05/2005	مكتبات مدرسية ومصادر التعليم	ليسانس اداب و تربية	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الزيارة الابتدائية إعدادية الثانوية المستقلة بنين 226
28/06/1995	مكتبات وتقنيات التعلم	بكالوريوس تربية		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الوكرة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات 227
30/05/2008	مكتبات وتقنيات التعلم	بكالوريوس تربية	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	محمد بن جاسم بن محمد آل ثاني الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين 228
01/05/1997	مكتبات ومعلومات	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الشمال الثانوية المستقلة للبنين 229
15/06/2002	مكتبات ومعلومات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	المرخية الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات 230
01/01/2001	مكتبات ومعلومات	ليسانس اداب و تربية		مسؤول مصادر التعلم	جمع التربية السمعية للبنين 231
01/01/2002	مكتبات ومعلومات	ليسانس		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	المنار النموذجية المستقلة 232
23/02/2004	مكتبات ومعلومات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	عبد الله بن زيد آل محمود النموذجية المستقلة للبنين 233
20/03/2008	مكتبات ومعلومات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الوسائل النموذجية المستقلة 234
11/07/2007	مكتبات ومعلومات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	أم معبد الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات 235
11/07/2007	مكتبات ومعلومات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	على بن عبد الله النموذجية المستقلة للبنين 236
01/01/2009	مكتبات ومعلومات	ليسانس		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	فاطمة بنت الوليد بن المغيرة الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات 237
27/12/1994	مكتبات ووثائق	الدبلوم نظام العام الواحد	دبلوم دراسات عليا	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	مسعود الابتدائية الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين 238
10/05/1997	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	روضة راشد الابتدائية الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين 239
01/05/1985	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	خالد بن الوليد الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين 240
30/05/1990	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	عمر بن الخطاب الثانوية المستقلة للبنين 241
24/06/1995	مكتبات ووثائق	الاستاذية	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	عمر بن الخطاب الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين 242
01/05/1991	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الكعبان الابتدائية الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين 243
14/07/1996	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	ناصر بن عبد الله العطية الثانوية المستقلة للبنين 244
01/05/1992	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الجميلية الابتدائية إعدادية الثانوية المستقلة بنين 245
01/05/1996	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	أم حكيم الثانوية المستقلة للبنات 246
01/01/1994	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب		مسؤول مصادر التعلم	عمر بن عبد العزيز الثانوية المستقلة للبنين 247
01/05/1996	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس		مسؤول مصادر التعلم	علي بن جاسم بن محمد آل ثاني الثانوية المستقلة للبنين 248
01/07/1997	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	ابن تيمية الثانوية المستقلة للبنين 249
09/12/2002	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	الدوحة الإعدادية المستقلة للبنين 250

		مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	عبد الله بن جاسم آل ثاني النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	251
29/11/2000	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	طارق بن زياد الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	252	
29/06/2007	مكتبات ووثائق	بكالوريوس		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	زينب الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	253	
14/11/2006	مكتبات ووثائق	ليسانس اداب		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	أم سلمة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	254	
01/01/1988	مكتبات وسائل تعليمية	ليسانس	جامعي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	خليفة الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	255	
01/01/2003	نظم المعلومات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	أم هاني الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	256	
11/07/2007	نظم المعلومات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	رقية الإعدادية المستقلة للبنات	257	
16/06/2005	نظم المعلومات	بكالوريوس	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الشقاب الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	258	
09/03/2010	نظم المعلومات	بكالوريوس علوم		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	خديجة الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	259	
12/12/2005	نظم المعلومات الادارية	بكالوريوس		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	المرخية الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	260	
21/06/2005	نظم المعلومات الادارية	الدبلوم العامة	دبلوم متخصص	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	روضة بنت محمد الثانوية المستقلة بنات	261	
09/03/2011	ادارة نظم ومعلومات	بكالوريوس اداره اعمال تكنولوجيا معلو	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الخور الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	262	
01/01/2007	ادارة نظم ومعلومات	بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	دحيل النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	263	
01/07/2009	ادارة نظم ومعلومات	بكالوريوس اداب		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	خليفة النموذجية المستقلة	264	
01/01/2009	ادارة نظم ومعلومات	بكالوريوس اداب		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	عبد الله بن جاسم آل ثاني النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	265	
12/07/2007	ادارة نظم ومعلومات	بكالوريوس تربية		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	البيان الابتدائية الثانية المستقلة للبنات	266	
01/06/1992	ادبي رياضيات وعلوم	الثانوية العامة	ثانوي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	سعد بن ابي وفاص النموذجية المستقلة	267	
01/06/1984	ادبي رياضيات وعلوم	الثانوية العامة	ثانوي	مسؤول مصادر التعلم	عمر بن عبد العزيز الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	268	
22/01/2001	ادبي رياضيات وعلوم	الثانوية العامة	ثانوي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الخليج العربي النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	269	
13/08/2006			جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الذخيرة النموذجية المستقلة	270	
09/03/2006		بكالوريوس اداب	جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	حلية السعوية الابتدائية المستقلة للبنات	271	
11/07/2007		بكالوريوس اداب		مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	سعود بن عبدالرحمن النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	272	
15/06/2007			جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الأندلس النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	273	
			جامعي	مسؤوله مصادر التعلم	الإخلاص النموذجية المستقلة للبنين	274	
				مسؤول مصادر التعلم	قطر التقنية الثانوية المستقلة للبنين	275	

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Sample Job Description for a secondary school librarian**

(Source: CILIP Guidelines, Barrett and Douglas 2004:94-95)

#### **Post title: School Librarian/ Information Learning Resources Manager**

#### **Prime Objectives of the post**

1. To manage a learning resource centre that incorporates print, online and e-learning resources and contributes to the learning targets of the school, growing in line with educational initiatives
2. To participate in school-wide development through the regular cycle of meetings with senior staff
3. To generate and implement the library development plans and to manage the library budget
4. To act as a co-educator by teaching staff and students the skills of information literacy within curricular contexts, particularly collaborating in the design and delivery of resource-based learning experiences
5. To act as an information navigator by selecting appropriate resources in all formats and bridging gaps between students and teachers and online/electronic information, the curriculum and subject teaching
6. To develop the library's contribution to literacy programmes and to inspire and enthuse students to read widely
7. To maintain and develop a working knowledge of educational initiatives, information and communications technologies and developments in school librarianship.

#### **Responsible for:**

##### **Staff**

1. Supervise and appraise library assistants
2. Supervise any trainees on placement for the NVQ qualification in Information and Library Services
3. Supervise and train student library assistants

#### **Statutory, within the context of the department**

1. Health and safety
2. Data protection
3. Conformity to copyright

#### **Responsible to:**

Deputy Head teacher with responsibility for the curriculum

#### **Person Specification**

Experience: At least two years working in a school or college library

## **Qualifications**

- Chartered member of CILIP: the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
- Degree or postgraduate qualification in librarianship or information management

## **Knowledge, skills, abilities**

- At interview the candidate needs to be able to demonstrate experience in the following areas:
- Secondary education with an awareness of current issues and trends
- Reading interests of secondary students and reader-development initiatives
- Information-literacy teaching
- Development planning, monitoring and evaluation
- Budget management
- Health and safety issues
- Library management systems
- Advocacy and vision
- ICT competence to ECDL level or equivalent
- Time management
- Behaviour management
- Materials selection in all formats

## **Personal and physical qualities**

- Likes teenagers
- Good interpersonal skills and confident communicator
- Experience team worker
- Enthusiastic, self motivated and flexible
- Able to work at shelves from floor level to 2m in height, to pack and unpack boxes of books, etc.

*This section will also include the employer's standard statement regarding equal opportunities and the candidate's availability to work the required hours and to participate in school events*