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Investigation on the Role of School Libraries Globally: A Conceptual Paper

N. P. Mahwasane

University of Venda, Department of Library and Information Services, South Africa

E-mail: Nkhangweni.mahwasane@univen.ac.za

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ABSTRACT This paper reports on the role played by school libraries for learners worldwide. The school libraries form part of the students and learners' academic programme. The role of libraries began to be professionalised in the late eighteenth century in Western Europe in the face of objections and grievances regarding the administration of book collections as well as the lack of knowledge of custodians. As a result, the librarians started to search for professional objectives for becoming more diligent and operational with collections that were destined to encourage both their utilisation and access. This paper explored the role of school libraries internationally. The methodology followed for this paper was studied by utilising a consistent literature review using a combination of the background and theoretical review methods. The results of the study indicate that developed countries have well equipped libraries with library collections in a different format. On the contrary, in the developing countries there is a lack of school libraries, those that are there are not up to standard. Based on these findings, it is recommended that all schools irrespective that they are in the developing countries should have a school library as well as a professional school librarian to assist in the library. Moreover, the school library should be equipped with a library collection that is relevant to the learners. The library collection should be developed with more books that will be able to meet the information needs of the learners. These include digital resources such as eBooks, e-journals, databases and digitised audio/visual materials.