

Inter-relationship among People's Lives, Communities and Libraries

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Abstract: *This paper tries to identify the role of the changing nature of library which is not merely a collection of textbooks. It includes other information sources like reference materials, books relating to school curriculum, general books not relating to a specific subject area, periodicals, newspapers, audio-visual materials, government publications and electronically stored and retrievable materials etc. These resources enable libraries to play a crucial role in the success of lifelong education of communities and society in general. Next, it discusses how the advent of the modern technology has transformed library services and its reflection on people's lives. The paper also highlights the journey of the library towards digitization. Lastly it depicts the inter-relationship among People's Lives, Communities and Libraries, which is a unifying factor in the community.*

Keywords: Community, SDI, Archive, WorldCat, Manuscripts, Library Housekeeping.

1. Introduction:

Peoples' life is defined as a set of activities, involving securing water, food, fodder, medicine, shelter, clothing and the capacity to acquire above necessities working either individually or as a group by using endowments (both human and material) for meeting the requirements of the self and his/her household on a sustainable basis with dignity. The activities are usually carried out repeatedly. In social sciences, the concept of Peoples' life extends to include social and cultural means, i.e. the command an individual, family, or other social group has over an income and/or bundles of resources that can be used or exchanged to satisfy its needs. This may involve information, cultural knowledge, social networks and legal rights as well as tools, land and other physical resources.

The word "community" is derived from the Old French 'comuneté' which is derived from the Latin 'communitas' (from Latin 'communis', things held in common), a broad term for fellowship or organized society. One broad definition which incorporates all the different forms of community is "a group or network of persons who are connected (objectively) to each

other by relatively durable social relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties, and who mutually define that relationship (subjectively) as important to their social identity and social practice.

According to Encyclopedia of Britannica, Library traditionally collection of books used for reading or study, or the building or room in which such a collection is kept. The word derives from the Latin 'liber', "book," whereas a Latinized Greek word, 'bibliotheca', is the origin of the word for library in German, Russian, and the Romance languages. The internet has already had a major impact on how people find and access information, and now the rising popularity of e-books is helping transform reading habits. In this changing landscape, public libraries are trying to adjust their services to these new realities while still serving the needs of patrons who rely on more traditional resources. The availability of free computers and internet access now rivals book lending and reference expertise as a vital service of libraries.

1.1. Traditional Library

Anon (2008) said that, traditionally, the library was merely a place that housed a collection of books that was available to the general public. Members of the library were able to borrow a certain number of books and then return them by a particular date.

1.2. Modern Library

Today, however, since the dawn of electronic resources, the internet and a diversification of learning materials the library represents a much more multi-faceted concept. Nowadays libraries contain books, journals, DVDs, audio books, CDs, manuscripts and magazines, covering a wealth of topics like vasectomy reversal and football and even film facts. In addition to these resources, according to Government guidelines, all libraries have computers with internet facilities, which open up a vast world of online resources, informational websites and spaces for discussion and interaction (Anon, 2008).

2. The Role of the Library

2.1. Continuous Learning

In terms of learning, the library offers the opportunity of continuous learning outside the formal structure of full-time education. Classes, exhibitions, talks and special events offer individuals the chance to pursue interests or simply learn about something they may have never heard of, in an informal setting. These events can often be a chance to catch up with friends as well as a source of learning and development and are designed to be enjoyable rather than serious.

2.2. Community Outreach

In addition to providing resources for research or exploration, libraries now offer a diverse variety of classes, discussion sessions and talks aiming to include all groups of society and improve practical skills as well as community cohesion. Despite being primarily focused

on attracting people into the library, many libraries also try to reach out to the wider community, particularly to those who are unable to travel to the library itself, by means of mobile libraries or online borrowing schemes; this helps to involve the whole community and also ensures that everyone is catered for and can enjoy reading and learning. The Framework for the Future programme launched in 2004 aims to improve skills in the community, particularly in those who do not use a library regularly as well as increasing staff skills and promoting the benefits of reading and learning. By involving the whole community, people can learn about different cultures and traditions as well as different generations and can therefore use this knowledge to understand and appreciate other ethnic groups and ages; this increases social interaction between different social groups and builds a more harmonious community.

2.3. A Meeting Place

The modern library also acts as a place where people can gather to meet new people or discuss books they may have read or articles they have discovered for example; being able to get together with others is a valuable component of successful community life and can increase people's confidence and self-esteem. The Children's story time, for example, not only offers an interactive learning experience for children but also encourages social interaction between the children but also between the adults who are accompanying them; this can be particularly beneficial for single parents who may struggle to meet new people due to the busy nature of their lives. Rapid developments in computers, telecommunications, and other technologies have made it possible to store and retrieve information in many different forms and from any place with a computer and a telephone connection. The terms digital library and virtual library have begun to be used to refer to the vast collections of information to which people gain access over the Internet, cable television, or some other type of remote electronic connection.

2.4 Library services allows for personal and professional development

The fact that so many materials are not only available, but available to be borrowed without paying a fee is of paramount importance. Many focus group participants noted that libraries "level the playing field." While many people of higher socioeconomic status routinely purchase books, subscribe to periodicals, and conduct their research online without ever visiting a library, many lower income individuals and families do not have that option. Universal access is one of the most important strengths of the library. The availability of resources, technology, and educational opportunities provide everyone with the availability to improve themselves and their life circumstances. Even those patrons in higher income brackets need to prioritize their spending, and the fact is that even those who could afford to purchase more books and materials appreciate having a large collection available for checkout (Anon, 2008).

3. The changing role of libraries

Libraries are collections of books, manuscripts, journals, and other sources of recorded information. It includes reference works, such as encyclopedias that provide factual information and indexes that help users find information in other sources; creative works, including poetry, novels, short stories, music scores, and photographs; nonfiction, such as biographies, histories, and other factual reports; and periodical publications, including magazines, scholarly journals, and books published as part of a series. As home use of records, CD-ROMs, and audiotapes and videotapes has increased, library collections have begun to include these and other forms of media, too. As society has begun to value information more highly, the so-called information industry has developed. This industry encompasses publishers, software developers, on-line information services, and other businesses that package and sell information products for a profit. It provides both an opportunity and a challenge to libraries. On the one hand, as more information becomes available in electronic form, libraries no longer have to own an article or a certain piece of statistical information, for example, to obtain it quickly for a user. In the electronic age, questions of copyright, intellectual property rights, and the economics of information have become increasingly important to the future of library service. Increased availability of electronic information has led libraries, particularly in schools, colleges, and universities, to develop important relationships to their institutions' computer centers. In some places the computer centre is the place responsible for electronic information and the library is responsible for print information. Libraries have responded by developing more sophisticated on-line catalogs that allow users to find out whether or not a book has been checked out and what other libraries have it. Libraries have provided Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) services, in which librarians choose information that may be of interest to their users and forward it to them before the users request it. Some librarians are experts about computers and computer software. Others are concerned with how computer technologies can preserve the human cultural records of the past or assure that library collections on crumbling paper or in old computer files can still be used by people many centuries in the future. The work of librarians has also moved outside library walls. Librarians have begun to work in the information industry as salespeople, designers of new information systems, researchers, and information analysts. They also are found in such fields as marketing and public relations and in such organizations as law firms, where staffs need rapid access to information (Estabrook, 2005).

3.1. Extended Social Role of Libraries

3.1.1. Libraries support literacy of non-literates

The free-flowing nature of the library also allowed for parents to actively participate in their children's reading. Noting the lack of literacy programs available for children in the community, the public library is the place that can support literacy development. As institutions, libraries support literacy events that tie to the larger cultural practices of coming together as part of a community (MacGillivray, 2010).

3.1.2. Library Stakeholders

All concerned people with libraries are stakeholders of a library; inside and outside of the library represent library users with children or grandchildren; employees from the community at large, who check out materials for use at their workplace, as well as job seekers; library users who contact public library reference libraries for information; and technology users with a need for Internet access and other technical support (Anon, 2011). Library extends its role by catering the need of transformed clientele using traditional and non-traditional services.

3.1.3. Use of Public Libraries for Community involvement

Today, in-person and on-line programs for reader development, language learning, homework help, free lectures and cultural performances, and other community service programs are common offerings. The library story time, in which books are read aloud to children and infants, is a cultural touchstone. The Internet has had a significant effect on the availability and delivery of reference services. Many reference works, such as the Encyclopedia Britannica, have moved entirely online, and the way people access and use these works has changed dramatically in recent decades. Rise of search engines and crowd-sourced resources such as Wikipedia have transformed the reference environment. In addition to the traditional reference interview, reference librarians have an increasing role in providing access to digitized reference works (including the selection and purchase of databases not available to the general public) and ensuring that references are reliable and presented in an academically acceptable manner. Librarians also have a role in teaching information literacy, so that patrons can find, understand and use information and finding aids like search engines, databases and library catalogs. Libraries may also offer free or cheap meeting space for community organizations and educational and entrepreneurial activity (Aabo, Audunson, & Varheim, 2010).

4. Library Management:

4.1. Library Housekeeping

Housekeeping operations of a library include all operations such as acquisition, cataloguing, maintenance and user orientation. Acquisition is one of the important functions of any library. The goal of the library which is to satisfy the users will depend on the acquisition system of the library i.e. the user of the library will be satisfied only if the library acquires reading materials based on the users' demands. Acquisition also results in effective and efficient collection development of the library. The library catalogue is considered as a mirror of the library because it reflects the collection of the library i.e. whether the library possesses good, bad or satisfactory collection. Maintenance of the collection is a fundamental responsibility of library. Orientation or user orientation has to do with introducing new library users to the library. IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for the development of library services, libraries are encouraged to assist their library users in developing skills to enable them to make the most effective use of the library resources and services.

4.2. Archives Maintenance

Archives are collections of papers, documents, and photographs (often unpublished or one-of-a-kind), and sometimes other materials that are preserved for historical reasons. They are created in the course of conducting business activities of a public or private body. Until the mid-15th century and the use of the printing press, such records were not distinguished from library materials and were preserved in the same places as other manuscripts. The importance now accorded to public records has been recognized as one outcome of the French Revolution, when for the first time an independent national system of archive administration was set up, for whose preservation and maintenance the state was responsible and to which there was public access. While the administration of archives shares with libraries the basic obligation to collect, to preserve, and to make available, it has to employ different principles and management techniques. Libraries might be described as collecting agencies, whereas archival institutions are receiving agencies: they do not select—their function is to preserve documents as organic bodies of documentation. They must respect the integrity of these bodies of documents and maintain as far as possible the order in which they were created. And, of course, the documents need catalogs and finding aids, or guides (Anderson, 2000).

5. Transformation of Library

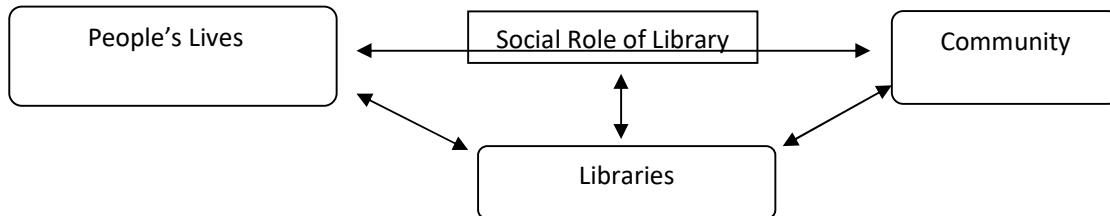
In the 21st century there has been increasing use of the Internet to gather and retrieve data. The shift to digital libraries has greatly impacted the way people use physical libraries. Libraries are trying to keep up with the digital world and the new generation of students that are used to having information just one click away. These facts might be a consequence of the increased availability of e-resources (Rachel, 2008).

5.1. The journey towards digitization

A library may make use of the Internet in a number of ways. A library may make the contents of its catalogues searchable online. Some specialized search engines such as Google Scholar offer a way to facilitate searching for academic resources such as journal articles and research papers. The Online Computer Library Center allows library records to be searched online through its WorldCat database. Websites such as Library Thing and Amazon provide abstracts, reviews and recommendations of books. Libraries provide computers and Internet access to allow people to search for information online. Online information access is particularly attractive to younger library users. Digitization of books, particularly those that are out-of-print, in projects such as Google Books provides resources for library and other online users. Due to their holdings of valuable material, some libraries are important partners for search engines such as Google in realizing the potential of such projects and have received reciprocal benefits in cases where they have negotiated effectively. As the prominence of and reliance on the Internet has grown, library services have moved the emphasis from mainly providing print resources to providing more computers and more Internet access. Libraries face a number of challenges in adapting to new ways of information seeking that may stress convenience over quality, reducing the priority of information literacy skills. The potential

decline in library usage, particularly reference services, puts the necessity for these services in doubt (Rachel, 2000).

6. The Relationship among the components:



Libraries are very good at partnering with nonprofits schools, and businesses, which raises the awareness of the importance of literacy in the community. It expands our reach. Libraries focus on literacy (all kinds), partnerships, community needs (health, etc.), and providing welcoming spaces where people can gather. Library builds citizens. It helps to educate individuals and foster thoughtful communities. It is also an essential component of communities. David Morris (2013) wrote an inspiring piece in which he argues for the value that libraries bring to their communities. More than just books and banks of computers, libraries are still places where individuals gather to explore, interact, and imagine. People builds library and libraries are meant for community. Hence there is a reciprocal relationship among people's live and communities.

Conclusion

Libraries remain responsible for acquiring or providing access to books, periodicals, and other media that meet the educational, recreational, and informational needs of their users. It continues to keep the business, legal, historical, and religious records of a civilization. Library is the place where a toddler can hear his first story and a scholar can carry out her research. Throughout the centuries, librarians have preserved books and records from the hazards of war, fire, and flood, and it is no idle boast to say that they have played a large part in maintaining the cultural heritage of their countries. The library enriches people's lives by rendering effective knowledge and thus produces the community orientation. It is the library which encompasses all round nourishments of a community and bridges the information gap of the individual and the society. Thus, we should decide to take a look at some of the specific ways in which libraries add value to our communities and serve as cultural centers.

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