



The role of libraries in higher education: A literature review

Lovepreet Kaur

Librarian, Baba Zorawar Singh Fateh Singh Khalsa Girls College, Morinda, Punjab, India

Abstract

This paper presents the role of libraries in the higher education system as well as the current trends and challenges of libraries. It is found that due to some challenges, the use of the library is limited that can be improved in future by providing more technological advancements like distance education through libraries or the development of online services of libraries in higher education institutions.

Keywords: libraries, education, importance of libraries, challenges, online services of libraries

Introduction

The role of the library in higher education seems to be more relevant as compared to primary and secondary education as a library in higher education is considered to be the main prerequisite. A library's primary function is to provide quality information to the readers. It is not as a simple bookshop connected to a reading space but as a versatile instructional tool available for everyone. To help achieve effective objectives including teaching, study, publishing programmes and so on, a library is created. The library has major roles in the modern education environment. It provides a platform to make available useful information stored in books, papers and other material to everyone. A well-appointed library is a requirement for academic, moral, spiritual and enlightening community members. It is an important component of citizens and the nation as a whole's absolute well-being. The existence of the university and academic phase relies completely on the network of libraries. The library proves the vital component of promoting all educational activities effectively (Chaudhari, 2018) ^[1]. Education is the transparency to the eye; It gives everyone perfect and sufficient knowledge; it generates a democratic and logical meaning (Shukla et al., 2013) ^[2]. Many libraries have endorsed educational activities by training, knowledge and reference programmes from several years. Several libraries offer extension programmes that fulfil the demand for specific groups of individuals with limited academic qualifications (Shukla et al., 2013) ^[2].

Library also provides sufficient resources for those in hospitals, prisons, rehabilitation centres and elderly and disabled community homes to study and acquire knowledge. Also, several libraries provide education-related services for individuals as well through public libraries. Scientific and Technological (S&T) growth has also contributed to an abundance of knowledge in the last two centuries. The library platform has been vastly enhanced and updated to meet the increasing needs of customers to meet new opportunities. There has since been a significant shift to the programmes that the libraries provide. Innovations have taken place in an area of library and information science with the emergence of new technologies in the computers field (Shukla et al., 2013) ^[2].

In particular, libraries are specifically meant to be:

- Empower people in community knowledge education opportunities.
- Additional awareness of persons undergoes advanced instruction in different subject areas.
- Flexibility to satisfy people's communication needs.
- Encourage associations and organisations' scholarly, civic and cultural initiatives.
- Provide options for fun and promote productive recreational use.
- To provide useful information and skills to the users.
- Ensure free access to the knowledge and ideas related to social, cultural, and economic information (Boucher & Lance, 1992) ^[11].

Libraries in this educational position can include the required details on the curriculum of established literacy schools in the community such as textbooks, journals, magazines or exercise books both in traditional and adult schools. This has helped get society more informed throughout the movement. In this sense, Libraries are known to have autonomous decision-making and common institution. Libraries are seeking to serve a wide variety of readers' desires to include different learning tools, including textbooks, magazines, literary books, and more. This paper reviews the role of libraries in education and how these help the students and other peoples to acquire knowledge and skills. This paper will also be useful to understand the needs of libraries in the development of societies and education.

Purpose of Education

The aim of education is primarily to create desirable improvements in people, which in turn alter numerous physical, economic, political, technical or cultural aspects of daily life in the community. Education can lead and improves citizens and helps them to transform culture appropriately. It aims at demonstrating what's best about the human being, improving his personality, preparing him to be helpful to society to add to his family, economic and social growth and making him a stronger citizen to help shape the environment. Education is mainly aimed at promoting the mind, enhancing specialized skills and gaining awareness, but particularly to build a sense of confidence and full engagement, trust and respect in the

future of this country for the young generation (Arjun et al., 2010). The human brain has amazing energetic power, but it has to be utilised and channelled by education to achieve the best outcomes. Learning without a library is like a soulless body, a car without a motor and just a house of cementless bricks. Education and libraries services cannot exist separately from others. Education shall be oriented to the complete growth of the human identity and the enhancement of regard for fundamental human rights. The schooling of students seeks to provide the young people with a clear and more desirable image of the world and potentials to take on roles of fact or an interconnected way of life. Education must have both knowledge and insight, as it is both that is educating the minds and educating the souls (Arjun et al., 2010).

Literature review

Education, as well as the library, are two independent and sovereign ideas that have a basic and syntactic relationship to each other and are coexistent. In the lack of the library, education cannot reside on its own, and if it cannot give education, libraries have no significance (Arjun et al., 2010; Education, 2020) ^[3, 4]. Via libraries, organisations like, universities, government bodies, and associations provide education to citizens. A college, club and social enterprise may never offer education on its own; each depends on a library, that is a core of healthy learning and a thirst- quencher for concrete, baseless, and provides ultimate information (Education, 2020) ^[4].

The library is just like an information warehouse. In a library, one can find books on almost every subject, whether culture, ecology or even fiction. Digital libraries are developed with the development of technology. Libraries are part of the educational system, and one without the other is incomplete (Shukla et al., 2013) ^[2].

In Literature, the number of researchers has done research on this topic and found the significance of libraries in the higher education system and found how the libraries can educate the students and peoples in the right manner.

In early times, G. Allen (1982) ^[5] described that the role of libraries is very important in education and it is highly dependent on the university's educational objectives. This study provides the urged that libraries and the librarians are the integral parts of the education system.

In 2006, A. Carolyn described that the libraries provide interconnected services to customers, they can support their students better in remote areas. The researcher described that the problem of accessibility and infrastructure is a persistent one for libraries, but the progress made by libraries to accessibility varied resources and a growing democratic community speaks to the future programmes that can be provided to remote users. University libraries have often supported training, access to material services and meetings with faculty for the creation of courses. The research concluded that distance learning offers the library the opportunity to expand its function of service on campuses and in educational levels.

In 2010, Arjun et al. described that library facilities are utilised for study and teaching purposes by the educational society within a University. The library promotes scholarly studies. The library is thus properly called the backbone of an educational institution. To effectively incorporate knowledge management, every library would need good guidance and direction from the top management who will

have a meaningful effect on how the institution communicates its knowledge. As libraries reach the 21st-century information era, one should not withdraw into knowledge management growth. We could rather be in the driver's seat, armed with our technical skills and experience (Arjun et al., 2010) ^[3].

In 2012, K. Thavamani studied that in developing countries, public libraries play an important role in elderly development and successful education at the grass-root level. This technical training program offers all the people beyond basic literacy and elementary education with lifelong learning opportunities. This is the only source for the Continuing Education Libraries. The research focussed on the trend of professional development system users. The literacy project initiated by Corporation of research and development Chennai had progressed through 3 stages including Complete Literacy Campaign, Continuing Education Programme (CEP), and Post Literacy Project (PLP) beneficial of the slum community. The research showed that women are the primary beneficiaries of the Continuing Education Libraries (Thavamani, 2012).

The numerous forms of libraries play an essential role in educating individuals in a country in various styles. When we look at the educational needs of the poor peoples, the usefulness of a library may be sensed and generalised at once. In developing countries, the most inexcusable feature of the condition of the poor peoples is that their kids are exposed to very inadequate public educations. It is because of their hardship that they cannot buy valued books and often face high tuition costs, etc. Through the assistance of libraries, a "fight" or fight against poverty may very well be carried out for which schooling has been confined and confined to the citizens in the upper strata in our community. Libraries provide nearly free of charge all related books and resources and children of the wealthy and the poor may gain similar positive education programme (Education, 2020) ^[4].

A paper by Mahwasane (2017) ^[13] presented that the Library offers a wide variety of data resources and the required kind of information resources that allow educational institutions to produce significantly resources to affect national development rapidly. The purpose of this paper is to discuss more on school libraries' roles in good education maintenance. To make learners more available to a broad variety of library services, the researchers suggested that libraries be established in the communities (Mahwasane, 2017) ^[13].

Another paper by Krolak (2006) ^[14] discussed the diverse innovation and ability of library participation as well as the obstacles to build literate lifelong educational environment. It demonstrates that book and library funding is at the core of the field of education, the advancement of education and the preservation of literacy skills for life, which then leads to development and poverty reduction. It concludes that the library encourages critical citizenship in a global democratic society by equal access to knowledge for everyone (Krolak, 2006) ^[14].

Challenges faced by libraries

For several developed nations, achieving quality education is a serious problem. The failure to invest in the creation and administration of successful school libraries is one of the issues that contribute to this obstacle. For students and teachers, the school library is an information centre. Thus,

the position of students in achieving the necessary literacy and computerization standard is paramount. To facilitate teaching and learning processes, school libraries must be properly configured and provide efficient library facilities.

The paper by Shonhe (2016) lists the problems which impede successful resources in developed countries in school libraries. The key goal is to provide a summary of the position of school libraries in developed countries. This would be challenging for developed countries if the situation is not resolved to attain their desired degree of growth and to be communities focused on information. These involve inadequate personnel procedure, inadequate staffing, lack of library policies, poor ICT technology, poor library services and a scarcity of information about the value of school libraries. This condition is especially problematic (Shonhe, 2016).

Another problem faced by several libraries is the budget allocation problem. Due to less or no budget, the institution may fail to arrange the required number of resources in the library. Normally, the budget problems persisted at the Academic Library Conference and globally the greatest problem for librarians. This comprises the competition for finance, the creation of library services and the defence of the library resources available. The library and the way it provides programmes have already had an immense effect on technology and the Internet. In a relatively short period, the accelerated digitization of material has changed library processes and structures and has culminated in the expertise necessary to manage digital libraries (Cheng, 2016) ^[9].

Another challenge faced by the library is the lack of proper training and expertise of the librarians. Librarians must be trained with the expertise they require. Jobs preparation and employment development opportunities are key to encouraging librarians to resolve their employment difficulties. Modern and evolving competencies, such as data visualisation and communication skills, which were not needed five or ten years ago, are now needed for librarians or make their job successful. Changes are expected during this new era, but it is difficult for certain stakeholders to convey these changes and get the requisite resources for communication (Cheng, 2016) ^[9]. Apart from this, some other issues faced by libraries include, finding and retaining quality employees, less support to new users, less/no funding for advancements (Hisle, 2002) ^[10].

Conclusion

Libraries are important and therefore cannot be isolated from the present education system. The availability of libraries in a country is vital and necessary for education. Any attempt is therefore made to enhance education quality is to improve the country growth. The shortage of libraries has a detrimental influence on education. It should then be encouraged to use by individual learners. When libraries strive to offer networked resources to employees, they can support their students best in distant places. The topic of access and resources for libraries remains a persistent one, but libraries' success in accessing a broad group of facilities and a larger constituency contributes to the future services accessible to remote users. The problem of access and facilities Academic libraries have always provided accountability for the training, knowledge access and consultation of faculty in the design of courses. This paper reviewed the important researches exploring the role of libraries in education and found that the libraries play an

important role in the building of knowledge in students. In future, more trends like online libraries and distance education through libraries can be adapted to make the libraries more popular in the education sector and institutions.

References

1. Chaudhari BH. The role of library in higher education. *Scholarly Research Journal for Humanity Science & English Language*, 2018;6(26):7616-7621.
2. Shukla SS, Singh KAP, Mishra AK. The role of libraries in literacy and education pre-requisite for education and sustainable development at all levels of education. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 2013;14(5):35-40.
3. Arjun, Kumar D, Majumdar AJ, Bose S. Role of Library in Higher Education in India. *International Journal of Librarianship and Administration*, 2010;1(1):1-12.
4. Education L. Library Resources and Their Role in Education, Osarome.blogspot.com, 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://osarome.blogspot.com/2011/10/library-resources-and-their-role-in.html>.
5. Allen G. The role of the library in higher education and the implications for the external mode of study: An Australian perspective, *Higher Education*, 1982, 11(5).
6. Carolyn A. Expanding the Role of the Library in Teaching and Learning: Distance Learning Initiatives, Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), 2006. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/nashville/snyderlogue>.
7. Thavamani, K. Role of Public Libraries in Continuing Education Programme (CEP) in Chennai Corporation, Tamil Nadu: A Study, *Indian Journal of Information Sources & Services (IJISS)*, 2012, 2(1).
8. Shonhe L. A Consolidation of Challenges Faced by School Libraries in Developing Countries. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 2019, 1.
9. Cheng, J., The Top 10 Challenges Academic Librarians Face in 2016. *The Wiley Network*. Retrieved January, 20, 2016, 2019.
10. Hisle WL. Top issues facing academic libraries: A report of the Focus on the Future Task Force. *College & Research Libraries News*, 2002;63(10):714-715.
11. Boucher JJ, Lance KC. The Roles of Libraries in Education. Colorado State Dept. of Education, Denver. State Library and Adult Education Office, 1992.
12. Harbo K, Hansen TV. Getting to Know Library Users' Needs—Experimental Ways to User-centred Library Innovation. *Liber Quarterly*, 2012, 21(3-4).
13. Mahwasane NP. The Roles of Libraries in Sustaining Quality Education in Secondary Schools: A Concept Paper. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 2017;51(1-3):42-46.
14. Krolak L. The role of libraries in the creation of literate environments. *International Journal of Adult and Life Long Education*, 2006;4(1/4):5.