

Understanding Libraries and Reading among Children

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By

Nkhangweni Patricia Mahwasane

With contributions by Ndileleni Pauline Mudzielwana

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This book is dedicated to the general public, the youth, adults, parents, teachers, teacher librarians, librarians, academic librarians, tertiary students and principals of schools. Mostly though, the book is dedicated to the education authorities, who have the authority to influence the development and improvement of school libraries and other types of libraries, and who take part in education-planning, decision-making and policy-making for the improvement of our children's education, with the main aim of building the reading nation.

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—Nkhangweni Patricia Mahwasane

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AASL:	American Association of School Libraries
ACRL:	American Association of College and Research Libraries
AECT:	Association of Educational Communications and Technology
ACARA:	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
CCL:	Canadian Council on Learning
CAPS:	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CPOS:	Citizens' Post Offices
CDROMs:	Compact Disc Read-Only Memory
CV:	Curriculum Vitae
ETD:	Educational Technology Division
IT:	Information Technology
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
IFLA:	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
LIS:	Library and Information Services
MOE:	Ministry of Education
MPCCs:	Multipurpose Community Centers
NCLB:	No Child Left Behind
SRCs:	School Representative Councils
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA:	United States of America

INTRODUCTION

NKHANGWENI PATRICIA MAHWASANE

A reading nation is a nation that is well-informed, while on the other hand a nation that does not read lacks extensive knowledge. A nation that reads makes well-informed decisions because it is knowledgeable. However, a child's ability to read plays an important role in their academic success. For the child to be able to learn they must be able to read. They can have all the strength and resources to learn, but if they cannot read then they are doomed to fail as they cannot continue with their studies. In order to develop a reading nation, more libraries, especially school libraries, should be developed in such a way that each and every school is provided by a school library which is well-equipped with a library collection that will supplement the school curriculum. Normally a school cannot operate successfully without a school library, so the library should form the backbone of the school in which it operates. The school library gives learners from all backgrounds equal opportunity to use library services. Consideration also needs to be given here to the communities and public libraries that can be of help to the community as a whole.

There are different types of libraries globally. In South Africa, there are different types of agreement and cooperation between libraries as a means to alleviate the burden of one institution. This book can be valuable if used as follows:

This book can be used in educating the community as a whole to acknowledge and value libraries since they are the storehouse of knowledge.

The community can also use this text to gain knowledge of how much they can gain by using the libraries that exist within their community.

The book can also be used to improve the lives of those who have dropped out of school and those who need to pursue their dreams by visiting libraries to consult various books there and to allow them to request advice from the librarian.

Finally, this book can be used by the education authorities to reinstate the use of school libraries and authorize their compulsory use in every school to allow an understanding how the library works and how the learners, as well as the whole school community, can benefit from it.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE LIBRARY SERVICES

NKHANGWENI PATRICIA MAHWASANE

Abstract

This chapter focuses on the different types of libraries that are available throughout the world, so its aim is to examine the library services in the international context. The following aspects are covered: moving libraries, bookmobiles, ship libraries, living mobile library services, virtual/digital library services, school libraries, elementary school libraries, middle school libraries, junior high school libraries, high school libraries and contemporary libraries. A systematic literature review will be utilized to examine library services that exist in a number of countries. The chapter recommends that libraries should be considered the backbones of their parents' bodies. They are necessary for providing the community with much-needed information.

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<http://www.tandfonline>.

Introduction

In the USA, contemporary libraries are concerned with the extensive use of the Internet as well as its various interactions like Web 2.0 and social network sites such as Twitter and Facebook, as well as blogs, Skype and LinkedIn (Hoelscher 2010). Moreover, there are some different types of portable library plans, which serve as mobile libraries, for example e-book

readers, such as the Kindle or even iPhones, containing an assortment of digital book files. The developers, technicians and librarians who participate in creating these strategies for mobile library services interchange practices in the functioning cluster 'm-libraries'. This occurs as a result of society being in the information age in which libraries are able to match the information needs of the client and help them achieve a knowledge-related association (Hoelscher 2010; Lan 2016).

Moving Libraries

Moving libraries are simply mobile libraries that can move from one place to another. They are moved making use of animals or human beings. There are three various types of libraries that are mobile in the USA, namely bookmobiles, ship libraries and living mobile libraries.

Bookmobiles: Bookmobiles are sometimes referred to as libraries on wheels. These are libraries which are housed in vehicles like buses or trains. These types of libraries make collections of books available for all users, as book mobile vehicles are used not only to hold the books and to make the library collection accessible but they also transport the library collection to where the users are. Their major functions are to provide literature and information to those people who are unable to reach immobile libraries. As a result, bookmobiles provide information literacy even to the people in the most remote areas (Hoelscher 2010; American Library Association 2010; Connaway 2015).

Ship Libraries: In countries like Bangladesh and Scandinavia, ship libraries are used in a similar way to bookmobiles in that they supply literature and information to people that cannot easily be reached by land. Fundamentally, ship libraries are identified by the types of the target group they intend to serve and the type of ship on which the target group is located. Ship libraries' purpose is partly for the amusement of the travellers on board. There are also special libraries intended for the staff working on ships and there are libraries that are intended to meet the information needs of scientists on research vessels (Hoelscher 2010; Connaway 2015).

Living Mobile Libraries: These types of libraries are mostly found in rural areas of Africa, Asia or South America. The living mobile libraries are moved from one area to another using animals like donkeys, camel or elephants with the aim of instructing information literacy as well as to meet the elementary literacy needs of the people in remote areas. Living mobile libraries are preserved by uncompromising persons with the aim of

providing people in remote areas with the literature they need as well as imparting them with necessary reading and writing skills. Residents in Andes in Cajamarea make use of people to deliver information by riding on the back of animals while in Indonesia information is transported by bicycle (Hoelscher 2010).

According to Halsey (2009), there are different types of libraries that are available to meet different user needs because one library alone cannot provide the information needed by various user groups. There are different types of libraries and they are as diverse as their nature and uses. Libraries fall into six general categories, namely school libraries, basic libraries, college and university libraries, government libraries, research libraries and special libraries.

Mobile Library Services

Hoelscher (2010) indicated that the term “moving library” is used not only for libraries that are transported between areas but also static libraries or library subdivision agencies that are strategically placed in areas where there are people on the move. These types of libraries are placed in highly-visited places; they effectively interact with their clients to capture their responsiveness and they also provide clients with information literacy. These automatic mobile library services are library machines that are usually found in urban areas and are located in areas such as subway stations, for example the Bibliometro, which is found in Madrid, Spain. Some automatic library machines are placed in areas that are visited by large numbers of people, like shopping malls or railway stations (“The Bookmobile Collection” 2011).

Virtual/Digital Library Services: Virtual and digital library services are accessed via the Internet and they are targeted at the mobile population of countries. As a result, they form the third part of moving libraries. An example of this type of library service is the one referred to as “Online”, which is provided by the German DiViBib and was commissioned in 2007. This is a service whereby clients can access databases and download movies and music for a specific period of time. Another example of such a library service is Europeana, which is a database containing digitized automated research work in libraries and museums as well as eBook collections provided by most libraries across Europe (Chowdhury 2001; Hoelscher 2010).

School Libraries: School libraries are responsible for catering to elementary school (Foundation Phase in South Africa), middle school (Intermediate Phase), junior high school and high school (Senior Phase) (Singh 2011). The main aim of a school library is to support various educational programs and improve learners' skills to search, retrieve and use information. Learners use library collections to do their schoolwork (Library Association 2000; Hooper 2016). Teachers also require school libraries as library collections are needed by them to help them prepare their lessons.

Learners at different educational levels have specific information needs, preferences and interests. The following section outlines different types of school libraries that contain a range of collections are suitable for learners' specific educational levels.

Elementary School (Foundation and Intermediate Phases) Library: Elementary school libraries have a vital role to play in the early years of children's education by providing undeveloped children with books and other resources that are at their appropriate level of education. Elementary libraries specialize in illustrated children's storybooks, colouring books and audio-visual materials. Most elementary school libraries store reference materials, for example encyclopaedias, for learners, fiction and non-fiction books, which need to be of a suitable level of understanding for elementary school learners. In some elementary school libraries, computers have been installed, equipped with scholastic programs appropriate for children.

In the Foundation Phase, learners, especially from Grade R to Grade 3 levels, are offered classes to train them the basic skills needed for searching and retrieving information from the library collection. They master the skills to search for a book by making use of the library catalogue to locate a book on the shelves, then they have the option to borrow it from the issuing desk books they can take it home. Foundation Phase learners can also utilize the school library collection to master elementary computer skills, or to listen to stories during designated story hours (Gisolfi and Asla 1998; Halsey 2009).

Middle School and Junior High School Libraries: Middle school and Junior High school libraries are those that cater to learners and students ranging from Grade 6 to Grade 9. They are concerned with encouraging learners' interest in acquiring information and creating ideas. Learners of Middle and Junior High school levels are given personal as well as collective investigation work to complete. The library collections of middle

and junior high school libraries are more advanced than those provided by elementary school libraries, in order to sufficiently meet the information needs of higher-level students to enable them to successfully complete their schoolwork. These libraries also provide access to library information through computer databases as well as advanced bibliographic tools (Halsey 2009; International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) 2015).

High School Libraries: High school libraries serve students from Grade 9 to Grade 12. High school libraries are large and contain a more advanced library collection than libraries for students at lower grades because the educational level at high school compels students to undertake research which requires use of a complex library collection. The high school library collection is made up of materials that support the teaching of various subjects such as mathematics, science, technology, social sciences humanities, art literature and other languages. As a result of long periods of time being spent by students in the school library conducting research, high school libraries are big enough to accommodate a large number of students at any one time. Highly developed and well-stocked high school libraries are expected to be equipped with computer laboratories, reference collections for teachers to prepare lessons, conference areas, rooms for group work, and classrooms. In some high school libraries, there is a space designated for college or vocational guidance. The types of information available in these spaces are concern examples of applications for colleges, vocational aptitude tests, and other collections intended to offer guidelines for high school graduation (Halsey 2009; IFLA 2015).

Contemporary Libraries

Contemporary libraries do not only contain print materials like books, magazines and newspapers but also include collections of film, sound recordings, art reproductions, maps, photographs, microfiche, CD-ROMs, computer software and online databases. As well as providing collections of study materials, contemporary libraries also provide telecommunication connections that give users access to information in isolated regions (Borgman 1999; Halsey 2009; Reed 2015).

Methodology

The theme of this paper was explored through a systematic literature review by utilizing a combination of both contextual and conceptual review

approaches. A thoughtful and knowledgeable review of suitable literature positions the researcher in a context of conflicting study.

Results

Teachers working at advanced-grade levels at elementary school, i.e. is the Intermediate Phase, are motivated to visit and use the school library during the course of the day to work on school research projects and assignments and to interact with learners. For learners at advanced-grade level, a flexible timetable encourages schools to incorporate the teaching of research skills and library material use into day-to-day classroom activities.

School libraries comprise materials in a variety of formats. They contain collections such as books, magazines, and newspapers and can also include computers, CD-ROMs, educational games, maps, photographs, sound and video recordings. Certain school libraries may also comprise regalia, that is, artifacts such as different types of stones for the study of geology, or different types of soil for the study of geography. Moreover, more and more school libraries are starting to participate in cooperation schemes where library resources are shared among participating school libraries (Brown 2015; Library Association 2000; Halsey 2009).

Discussion

The main aim of a library is to collect, organize, preserve, and provide easy access to knowledge and information. Libraries play an important role in the conservation of treasured records of culture which enables them to be passed on to future generations. Libraries are therefore regarded as an important component of linking the past, present and future. Moreover, libraries take responsibility for ensuring cultural records are well-maintained and preserved for use in the future, irrespective of their format, electronic or otherwise. Libraries assist people of any age by providing access to the information they need, whether it be to learn, work, play or govern (Besser et al. 2014; Halsey 2009).

People from all walks of life rely on contemporary library resources to enable them to do their job effectively. This is consistent with research that suggests people use library collections to access materials with the purpose of reading for pleasure as well as to gain access to recreational information such as films and novels. On the other hand, learners use the library to supplement lesson materials to boost their subject knowledge, to master

skills in searching and locating sources of information and to develop good study habits and a reading culture. Moreover, government officials often use libraries to conduct research concerning issues relating to legislation and public policy matters (Halsey 2009; Reed 2015; Scott and Owings 2004). With this in mind, it can be argued that it is logical that a school library can be referred to as a school library media center that is situated on school premises. A school library media center provides access to a wide range of information sources to learners, staff and to parents.

As a result, the school library media center ensures that all its users have equal access to books and other reading materials, as well as to information technology (according to Standards for the 21st Century Learners, accessed 2013). A school library media center provides all types of information resources and it is automated and makes use of both electronic and print materials (Markuson et al. 1999; Morris 2004). School libraries are different from public libraries because they specialize in providing learner-oriented materials, which support and personalize a school's curriculum. Furthermore, school libraries function as the focal point and organizing agency for all material used in schools (Scott and Owings 2004; Morris 2004).

The school library collection should consist of books, periodicals, films, recorded sound, and other digital sources. These items are also for the education, pleasure and amusement of teachers and parents but crucially they extend and improve the school curriculum (Morris 2004). To this effect, Celano and Neuman (2001) contend that the need for both school and public libraries has increased over time and so libraries should address literacy as a lifelong learning process.

Conclusion

In This paper examined the various types of libraries that exist across the world. The paper outlined the main aims of these libraries, the materials or collections contained within them, their major functions and their locations. It also demonstrated that libraries are regarded as hubs that provide learners with learning materials that are available in different formats to support the school curriculum. There cannot be successful learning without libraries. As a result, the availability of libraries is of utmost importance.

Limitations

Only schools in developed countries provide contemporary libraries, while in developing countries there is a lack of libraries, meaning the notion of libraries in these areas, is unfortunately still a fantasy.

Recommendations

Developing countries should develop libraries both in school and in public places, and they must equip them with contemporary information resources so that learners, in this information age, are able to develop an understanding of what a library is and how a library works.

All Foundation Phase (elementary school) and Intermediate Phase schools, as well as high schools should be provided with a library to enable learners to grow up knowing the types of libraries that are available to assist them with their information needs.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE LIBRARY: AN INFORMATION SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY

NKHANGWENI PATRICIA MAHWASANE
AND NDILELENI PAULINE MUDZIELWANA

Abstract

The community library's environment is not a complex one. Both semi-literate and illiterate people should be able to use this type of library. A community library should not be a frightening place, and the way services are provided to community members should be user-friendly. The educational and economic status of the community should also be taken into account as far as membership of a community library and its information services is concerned. This chapter focuses on public and community libraries, as well as community centers, school library services in rural communities, media centers and library cooperation with a study of types of cooperation and cooperative agreements.

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Introduction

People originating from an African culture are not necessarily illiterate, as they possess a certain level of education in their own information environment (Ogundipe 1994). Public libraries emerged in modern societies to meet the needs of literate users. According to Mostert (1998: 71), the typical Western public library is suitable for those community members who are: “well-educated, literate, and middle-class, whereas the newly literate and illiterate members of the community are not taken into account”.

Community libraries and information services play an important role in rural areas by empowering members of those rural communities in as far as their basic needs are concerned (Mayer 2002). Therefore, these libraries and information services should aim to serve the whole community, including the illiterate.

Observations and Discussion

Public and Community Libraries

Mostert and Vermeulen (1998) are of the opinion that public libraries are meant to serve an educational role in the community. However, problems concerning the daily lives and roles of people in the community may be ignored. The above implies that in some instances only the educated group may benefit from public library services. The type of accommodation, library collection and services within the community could be geared mainly towards literate members of the community. This implies that public libraries do not meet the real needs of the community as a whole. To address this disparity means that library and information services (also known as LIS) have to adjust to comply with the information requirements of users that aren't fully literate.

Community libraries can also be regarded as community information centers. The community library and information services it provides aim to uplift the living standard of the community with “timely educational, informational, recreational and cultural information, documents or resources” (Mokgaboki 2002: 78).

Mokgaboki (2002) states that the cluster library is ideal for rural communities because there is still an imbalance in community library and information services. Communities within reach should ideally be clustered

together to be served by one common community library and information service in order to eliminate financial problems.

Books, being sources of information, are useless to people if they are unable to read. These people need services that will meet their most basic needs, especially food and safety provision; they need services that provide relevant information about social security programs that provide food and shelter to those in need (Mayer 2002; Mokgaboki 2002).

Public and community libraries should cater not only to the literate sector of people but everybody within a community, whether literate or not (Mostert and Vermeulen 1998). Community library services should be adapted to the needs of a particular community. Furthermore, for community libraries to be successful, they need to be established with the assistance of the community. Mostert and Vermeulen (1998), as well as de Vries and van der Merwe (2004), believe that community leaders, in addition to library users and staff, should be involved in deciding which types of services should be established and which types of collection should be developed.

Library planning and community analysis are of great importance and should be conducted thoroughly in order to establish the exact needs of the community, so that the relevant services that are necessary to meet the needs of the community as a whole will be established and developed. As far as the accommodation for the community library is concerned, any ordinary type of accommodation can be used as a community library.

Zaaiman et al. (1988) state that the information provided by a service to a community should be relevant to the information needs of that particular community, because the information needs of one community are not always the same as those of another community. Both Zaaiman et al. (1988) and Kernicky (2006) agree that an information audit or a community analysis is very important in order to have the best knowledge of the information needs of each particular community so that relevant services are established and provided effectively. They say that an information audit is required to investigate the type of information needs of a particular community before any type of library or information service is established.

Considering library buildings found in developed areas, there are other types of library services could be considered suitable for rural areas. Taking into account that there is poverty in rural areas, establishing a conventional library may be expensive compared to other types of library facilities that could be used, discussed below. Alternative types of library services could

be provided in rural areas if they provide facilities that are affordable. They should try to focus on the needs of rural community members who do not have a reading culture.

In the past, according to Mostert (1998:72), community libraries were regarded as a solution to the problems experienced with some public libraries that were not community orientated. "Community libraries were regarded as being community oriented because they were based on the information needs of the community as a whole" (Mostert 1998:72).

Public libraries have increasingly evolved to become more community-orientated and many have changed their names to include the words 'community library'. As a result of this evolution, the services that are provided for one community, say Community A, should differ from the services provided for another community, say Community B, because each library's services should cater to the type of information needs of the particular community it serves.

Mostert (1998), Mostert and Vermeulen (1998) and Bekker and Lategan (1988) discuss the types of services provided by public and community libraries which are suitable for rural communities. Those types of services are outlined below:

- The first type of service is the referral service, where information concerning the community is provided upon request and where the librarian will be able to refer the user to the correct service if the community library is not of help.
- The direct service is where the user contacts the librarian to for help with problems they are experiencing.
- Service awareness is the process by which the library staff make users aware of the sources and services that they can use to their own advantage.
- Another service is the do-it-yourself service, where the community identifies the type of skills that need to be taught to the users so that they can be self-reliant, for example banking, adult literacy and other important programs.

According to Mostert (1998) and Kernicky (2006), a library can also provide practical assistance services where users will be assisted with basic tasks such as correctly completing a form, making a phone call, creating a Curriculum Vitae (CV), using typing and photocopying machines, and accessing information on the Internet.

Kernicky (2006) is also of the opinion that a library can serve as a public access center in which services such as computer access, fax machines, newspapers, and printing services can be made available for the community's use. Rural communities need services that can provide them with survival-related information on topics such as healthcare and sanitation, as well as information to help with other problems like "social, political and legal rights information" (Mostert 1998: 72).

Community Centers: Snyman and Snyman (2003) found that the types of services that would suit the needs of rural communities in South Africa are Multipurpose Community Centers (MPCCs), as well as the Universal Service Agency's tele-centers (USA tele-centers), and the Citizens' Post Offices (CPOS). Although MPCCs provide digital access, illiterate users need the reading abilities of a literate person to use all the facilities offered by MPCCs. The parents of rural children are the target group for these services rather than the children themselves.

Snyman and Snyman (2003: 95-107) suggest:

- These services "can be regarded as the most important vehicles of the center approach chosen by the government to offer a range of developmental services including information services".
- MPCCS enable rural communities to access various information facilities. Examples of services provided by MPCCS are computer training, Internet access, public phones, printing, scanning, copying and word processing services, and fax machines.
- The USA tele-centers are situated in previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa where many people are poor and unemployed. Examples of services include copying facilities and word processing.
- CPOS are mainly intended for disadvantaged rural communities. Examples of services offered by CPOS include faxing, binding, scanning, laminating, and Internet access.
- Rural information centers: Kernicky (2006) recommends that rural libraries should be adapted to become rural information centers that are community-orientated, active and able to provide the community with services that are relevant to their needs, since most people living in rural areas are not educated. The services, resources and collections should suit the needs of people in rural communities that cannot read and write.

Kernicky (2006: 31) believes that "the rural information centers provide the community with relevant, timely and current information". Mostert (1998) is of the opinion that the type of services and community information that need

to be provided should enable community members to solve their daily life problems and enable them to function well within their community.

Community information includes:

- Survival information on areas such as health, childcare, housing, finance, legal and political rights information
- Citizen action information, required for social, political, legal and economic development.

The type of information that should be provided to the community includes self-help information or services, back-up programs, advice services and life skills programs. For example, information that will help people to cope with their personal problems in daily life challenges, and work skills programs that will train people to do certain types of jobs, such as childcare (Bekker and Lategan 1988).

School Library Services in Rural Communities

The school library is different from other types of libraries in the way its main priority is its educational aim. The school library is often situated in a room or rooms designated for storage and use of information resources, and it can be used in conjunction with other resources within the school. There are different types of school library models, including the media center, resource center, or information center, as well as the school and community library, integrated library, school-housed public library, classroom library, book box and mobile book service (Naidoo et al. 1997).

Dube (1998) agrees with de Vries and van der Merwe (2004) that the varied types of libraries can be combined to become more suitable services. The combination of school libraries and public libraries, resulting in school-community resource centers, is another option for library service improvement, and this could be suitable for rural communities. These school-community resource centers could be designed to cater for people from various stages of development, including illiterate groups, semi-literate groups and literate groups. The combination of school and public libraries is of great importance in as far as funding is concerned, because the stakeholders will be required to contribute a certain amount. Moreover, Library and Information Service (LIS) agencies would be able to prevent any form of discrimination among community members.