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THE ROLE OF LIBRARY CULTURE IN YOUTH EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the role of library culture in the education of the younger generation. Libraries have historically served not only as repositories of knowledge but also as powerful educational institutions that shape the intellectual, moral and social development of youth. The study shows that such components of library culture as reading culture, information literacy and the organization of meaningful leisure are closely connected with the formation of a well-rounded personality. Special attention is paid to the transformation of libraries in the digital age, the development of electronic resources and the preservation of the educational mission of libraries in the conditions of information overload. At the same time, the national policy of Uzbekistan, including the modernization of library infrastructure and the strategic importance of cultivating reading culture among the younger generation, is involved in the analysis. The article is based on theoretical and empirical sources, and practical recommendations are developed on strengthening the educational potential of libraries, improving library services for youth and supporting the culture of reading in the digital era.

Keywords: library culture, youth education, reading culture, information literacy, public libraries, school libraries, digital libraries, media literacy, lifelong learning, educational function of libraries.

ENTRANCE

Throughout human history libraries have been considered one of the most important institutions of the accumulation and transmission of knowledge. From the legendary Library of Alexandria to the clay tablet archives of ancient Babylon, from the medieval monastery collections to the first public libraries of the modern era, book repositories have always performed a dual function: they preserved the intellectual heritage of mankind and provided new generations with access to education. It is no coincidence that the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, when books became more accessible thanks to printing, were accompanied by a rapid growth of schools and universities. The history of world education convincingly shows that wherever an educated generation grew up, a developed library culture existed next to it, supporting the habit of systematic reading and independent thinking.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the role of library culture in youth education from a historical, pedagogical and sociological perspective. The study examines the influence of library culture on the formation of reading habits, information literacy, moral values and social activity of the younger generation. The objectives of the article are: first, to reveal the essence and components of the concept of library culture; second, to show the educational functions of libraries in the formation of reading culture and information literacy of youth; third, to analyze the transformation of libraries in the digital age and its influence on young readers; fourth, to consider the national context of the development of library culture in Uzbekistan and to develop practical recommendations for strengthening the educational potential of libraries.

MAIN PART

Library culture is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon that includes both the material base of library activity and the spiritual values associated with books and reading. In the specialized literature, library culture is understood as the level of organization of library work, the professional skill of librarians and, at the same time, the degree of mastery of book and information heritage by readers. The foundations of library and information science consider the library as a social institution called upon to serve the interests of education, science and culture[1]. In a broad sense, the library culture of society is manifested in how much its members read, how they relate to the book, whether they know how to search, evaluate and use information. For young people this culture becomes part of the general culture of personality: it includes reading skills, the habit of referring to authoritative sources, respect for the intellectual achievements of predecessors and the ability for independent cognitive activity.

The educational function of libraries is realized in several directions, among which the support of formal education deserves primary attention. The guided inquiry model developed by C. Kuhlthau and her colleagues shows that the school library is not an auxiliary room with books, but a full participant of the educational process, where students learn to formulate questions, search for sources, synthesize information and present the results of their work[4]. In turn, IFLA school library guidelines emphasize that school libraries equip students with the skills of lifelong learning, develop their imagination and enable them to become responsible citizens[5]. Within the walls of the library a young person acquires the most important meta-skills of modern education: the ability to work independently with a text, to compare different points of view and to draw reasoned conclusions. Practice shows that graduates who actively used school libraries adapt more easily to the requirements of higher education institutions.

Modern libraries act as trusted navigators of youth in the information environment. Studies of the information behavior of young people show that adolescents experience an acute need for reliable information about education, career choice, health and legal issues, but often do not know where to find it[9]. Librarians help young readers to distinguish verified sources from dubious ones, teach the basics of media literacy and information hygiene. M. Merga emphasizes that libraries create communities of readers in which teenagers and young people see that reading is a valuable and prestigious activity[10]. Book clubs, literary debates, quizzes and meetings with writers held in libraries develop communication skills, aesthetic taste and critical thinking. Thus, the library performs a socio-pedagogical function, complementing school and family in the education of youth.

In Uzbekistan the development of library culture among youth is regarded as a state priority. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-3810 determined measures for the radical improvement of the National Library named after Alisher Navoi, the introduction of modern information technologies and the strengthening of the material base of libraries[3]. In accordance with this document, the organizational and legal foundations of the library sector were updated, and the information and library service of the country began to integrate into the international library community. The network of “Spirituality and enlightenment” centers operating at educational institutions includes libraries, reading rooms and book clubs, contributing to the improvement of the culture of reading among young people. Electronic libraries created in universities of the country provide students with access to both national and world information resources, which is especially important for the training of competitive specialists.

The solution of these problems is connected with the further modernization of library activity. The libraries of the new type being created in the world are media libraries and cultural centers equipped with modern technologies, where young people can not only borrow books, but also attend lectures, exhibitions, film screenings and creative studios. Cooperation of libraries with schools, colleges and universities allows to build a unified system of support for reading from primary school to higher education. The professional development of librarians, the training of

specialists in media literacy and digital services, and the active use of social networks for the promotion of reading become the key directions of the transformation of library culture in the interests of youth education.

CONCLUSION

Library culture has been and remains an integral component of youth education. Throughout history the library has been the institution in which the cognitive interests of the young generation are formed, the habit of systematic reading and independent thinking is brought up, and the moral values of society are transmitted from elders to youth. The analysis carried out in the article shows that the educational potential of the modern library is realized through several interrelated functions: the support of formal education, the formation of reading culture and information literacy, the socialization and moral education of youth, and the provision of equal access to knowledge. Digitalization does not abolish these functions, but transforms their forms, expanding the educational opportunities of libraries and making knowledge more accessible to the young generation.

Based on the results of the study, practical recommendations can be formulated: first, to regularly renew the book stock, combining classical literature with modern publications demanded by youth; second, to organize special courses and internships for librarians on working with the digital generation and on promoting reading in social networks; third, to expand cooperation between libraries, schools and universities in the formation of a unified educational environment; fourth, to create modern media libraries, creative spaces and book clubs in libraries that can attract young readers[3]. The implementation of these measures will strengthen the role of the library in the education of youth and increase its attractiveness for the new generation.

Prospects for further research in this area are connected with the study of the influence of artificial intelligence technologies on library services, the development of virtual libraries and multilingual digital resources for youth, as well as with the measurement of the direct influence of library programs on the academic performance of students. The solution of these issues can fundamentally change not only the activities of libraries themselves, but also the future shape of the educational environment in which the young generation will grow up.

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