Keywords: Library, Information resource, Library service, Educational function.

Abstract. With the development of libraries, there are new manifestations of their educational functions. Through the analysis of the changes in the aspects of resources constructions, information service and space service in libraries, new features of educational functions were summarized. The libraries should cultivate readers through educational functions to lay the foundation for lifelong learning goals.

Introduction

The history of the Western Libraries originated from the ancient two river basins: the public libraries in Egypt, Greece and Rome. During the middle ages they evolved into libraries of Cathedral and Abbey. After industrial revolution the modern public libraries have been appeared.

There are basically two forms to express the word “library” in western languages: one is Library, and the other is Bibliotheca. The word “library” comes from the word “Liber” in Latin, which means bark. Because bark was once used as a material for writing, the bookstore was called “Libraria” in Italian, “Libraries” in French. Later the word came into English from French, and became Library. While the word Bibliotheca, derived from the word “Biblos” in Greek, meaning books, which came from the pronunciation of “Papyrus” in Greek. Later, the places where storing books were called Bibliothek in Greek, and Bibliotheca in Latin. Nowadays, the word Bibliotheca is used in Russian, German, French, Italian, Spanish to express the word library, only with some small differences in the spellings. But in China, it was firstly called “ancient loft for collecting books”.

From “Ancient Loft for Collecting Books” to Modern Library

Chinese ancient lofts for collecting books rose in the period Xia and Shang Dynasties (about 2070BC-1046BC). With the development of economy and culture, the numbers of books had been greatly increased in the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period in China (about 770BC-221BC), and the management of collecting books had correspondingly developed. During the three kingdoms periods (about 220AD-280AD), the three kingdoms had all created royal library, with government officials took charges of books and established catalogs. In Jin Dynasty (265AD-420AD), the book Four-part Categorization by LI Chongzao had established classical four parts classification system. In Sui Dynasty (581AD-618AD), libraries had popularized in government departments. From Song Dynasty (920AD-1279AD), Chinese ancient libraries were in prosperous period. With the widely use of wood block printing and the invention of movable type printing, various books were widely spread. A lot of famous ancient academies, like the White Deer Grotto Academy in Jiangxi Province, Yuelu Academy in Hunan Province, Yingtian Academy in Henan province all had a rich collection of books. In these ancient academies, the function of books borrowing had been improved. There is also remarkable achievement in the field of bibliography and library science research, such as Zheng Qiao systematically summarized the theory and method of Chinese bibliography, book categorization and acquisition in his book General Annals [1].
Chinese ancient libraries had made a great contribution to preserve of a large number of classical books, record and perpetuate human cultures. But they were the private libraries of the feudal ruling classes to collect all kinds of rare books; they only paid attention on collection and preservation. The main features of ancient libraries are doing version identification research, literal emendation and categorization, then finally preservation.

Contrary to the long history of ancient loft for collecting books, the word library is a completely alien noun and modern cultural phenomenon in China. The word library in Chinese directly comes from Japanese, which was originally introduced by Liang Qichao to China. In September 1896, the word library firstly appeared in the newspaper *The Chinese Progress* which Liang Qichao edited. However, the new word did not seem to be accepted immediately for the people, some of early modern libraries were still called “loft for collection books”. It is known that before 20th century, only Beijing TongYi Academy Library entitled with this new word in 1897. From the beginning of the twentieth century, the use of the word library began to rise. For example, there was an article named *Ancient Library* in *Qingyi* newspaper in September 1900, and the journal *Educational World* also published an article named *About libraries’ rules in kindergartens and blind schools* in June 1901.

In 1905, Hunan Library was established. This is the first official public library that formally entitled with the word library in Chinese history. 1909 is the most important year in the history of Chinese modern libraries, in which many official public libraries had been built. In December 1909, in the view of the establishments of the provincial public libraries, the Qing government formally promulgated the statute for national and provincial public libraries. The statute stipulated that the purpose of libraries’ establishments is to preserve the national essence, cultivate talents, support specialists and students learning and borrowing. This was the first legislation in the history of Chinese library. After the establishment of the Republic of China (1912), the Metropolitan Library officially opened to the public in August 1912. As a national library, its establishment had an epoch-making significance in the history of Chinese libraries, which implied the completion of transformation from the feudal library to the modern library.

Modern library is a kind of institution for social education, although it also has the responsibility to preserve and protect literature, but mainly to spread knowledge, to achieve the purpose of social education. The main features of modern library are services to readers and social education.

**Contemporary Library**

Since the year 2000, with the continuous improvement of internet technology, information construction has entered into a comprehensive development stage, and modern libraries also face new transformation. The changes in the information environment are challenge which brings pressures for innovation; but it is also an opportunity to lead the library to a broader and more dynamic road. In the new information environment, it is necessary to redefine the role of the libraries and the relationship between the libraries and their readers. But the core function of libraries has not changed, that is service and social education.

**Changes of Resource Construction**

In the digital age, the library was at the crossroad of paper resources and digital resources, many libraries reallocated their purchase budgets and began to build digital resources. Today most libraries are composite structures with both two kinds of resources.

As a traditional resource in library, how to properly manage paper resource and develop its content value and how to integrate it with digital resources are problems faced by many libraries. In 2014, OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) Research released a report, “*Understanding the Collective Collection: Towards a System-wide Perspective on Library Print Collections,*”[2] which established evidence that allowed and encouraged libraries to begin the shift from local provisioning of library collections and services to increased reliance on cooperative infrastructure, collective collections, shared technology platforms, and “above-the-institution” management strategies. In the report *Collection Directions: The Evolution of Library Collections and Collecting*...
the author believed that print inventory and collection management activities that were once organized at institution scale, are now being reorganized at group scale within regional geographies.

In the aspect of construction of digital resources, many libraries paid more and more attention to local resources and special resources. Except purchasing digital resources from publishers, lots of academic libraries started to build special digital resources with their own paper resources, such as doctoral dissertation systems, institutional repository in university. At the same time, libraries also absorb online open resources to expand their own digital resources, for examples, add the link of MOOC and others open access resources into the library’s webpage.

Changes of Service Mode

The term Library 2.0 was coined by Michael Casey on his blog Library Crunch in September 2005. Michael Stephens of Saint Joseph County public library argued that the principle of library 2.0 was to try to break the barriers, such as the obstacles we added to various services, the obstacles about time and places, and the obstacles we have in our inherent practices [4]. Ken Chad and Paul Miller put forward the view of principles of Library 2.0 in their book Do libraries matter? The rise of library2.0 [5]: the library is everywhere; the library has no barriers; the library invites participation; the library uses flexible, best of breed systems.

Based on the arguments put forward by various scholars, Library 2.0 is mainly to use the concept of Web 2.0, emphasizing the participation of readers. Therefore, Library 2.0 can provide more real-time content, more methods for searching information. It is satisfied information transmission services that providing users with convenient, flexible and efficient ways to get information through the network connection.

With the advent of Web3.0 technology, some scholars have put forward the concept of Library3.0. Hubert C.Y. Chan of Hong Kong Polytechnic University argued in his research report Library 3.0 for public Library [6] that a full implementation of Library 3.0 is still remote, and actually there is no consensus on the definition of Library 3.0. But he updated the Library3.0 generation evolution graphical and elaborated the technology available in the market for library.

Changes of Space Function

In recent years, various types of libraries, especially academic libraries and research libraries have appeared with a new image, which highlighted the continuous development of space function.

The traditional library construction and space service have once been neglected in the digital age. But since 2014, many libraries’ building space has been rejuvenated. People-oriented, innovation-oriented and collaboration-oriented are power resource of this rejuvenation. In the past year lots of libraries rebuild and renovate the original building, trying to provide various types of space service. The new guidance and evaluation criteria for library space construction have also been introduced. Space is the most direct and most sensible embodiment of the library function, the rigid libraries’ buildings have began to realize the intelligent functions, and achieve a harmonious balance between hardware and software, entity and virtual, place and atmosphere, structure and function.

After the transformation of the original building space, a number of new library physical space forms have emerged in 2014, such as interactive teaching laboratory, collaborative work environment, information and data center, makerspace and so forth. Although from the names to the contents these new forms varied, all reflect the common principle: the function of library space is not only to store collections, but also to support user’s collaborative activities. The most obvious example is that the library space is no longer named by the type of collection or resource attributes(such as “periodical reading room”, “electronic reading room”, etc.), but to use the users’ activities to name (such as “learning space”, “data visualization laboratory”, “makerspace”, etc.)

The new library is no longer a container for storing books, but a platform for innovative academic and interdisciplinary research.

Among the emerging forms of library space, digital scholarship center is most representatives, which includes complete physical space and can provide varied service for different projects. It is argued in the report Trends in Digital Scholarship centers [7] that an increasing number of
universities and colleges are establishing digital scholarship centers to support high-end digital project, which serve research, teaching, and learning. Digital scholarship centers focus on relationships, extending the ways in which librarians and academic computing professionals relate to and work with faculty (and often students) and their scholarly practices.

The Educational Functions of Library

Cultivate People by Books

The educational mode of cultivating people by books has run through the whole development stages of library. In the transformation from ancient library to modern library, the most important change is that the use and circulation of books have been paid more attention. In 1902, the Library of Imperial University of Peking has been established, it is written in its constitution of university that “scholars should read a lot of books, but they cannot afford all books by themselves. As a representation for provincial libraries, a big library has been established in Imperial University of Peking, in which domestic and foreign books are widely collected to support reading and learning[1].” In 1912, the Imperial University of Peking was renamed Peking University. As director of library of Peking University, Li Dazhao focused on the rectification, reform and expansion of the library. He pointed out that the modern library was a research room, where librarians do not only have to keep and protect books, but also have to help readers to make the most use of them, and this is the educational function of library. In 1956, China promulgated the regulation of academic and research libraries, which clearly stipulated that academic library is an institution serving for teaching and research. This regulation clarified the nature and function of academic library. As manager and navigator of knowledge, library provides physical space and literature for readers. While as an extension of textbooks, the literature in academic library can help readers widen their knowledge. And the library’s strong cultural atmosphere and elegant environment can also make the readers influenced subtly.

Information Literacy Education

In 1984, the Ministry of Education issued Circular on Printing and Distributing the Opinions on Setting up Courses of Retrieval and Utilization of Literature in Colleges and Universities. The courses mainly use the library as the teaching center, in order to improve the ability of information retrieval and information processing of students. In addition to their own responsibilities, librarian began to play a role in teaching. Many universities stipulated information retrieval course as a public elective course, directly brought into the credit system management. At the same time, aims at freshmen, many academic libraries also set up a new course named How to Use Our Library, which introduce the space, equipments and collections of library to freshmen to help them quickly familiar with library. So far, there are various forms in information retrieval courses. For example, some universities divided the course into social science information retrieval and network information retrieval. In the part of social science, the traditional reference books are focused on discussing, like bibliographic, index, and almanac. While in the part of network information retrieval, the skills of using search engine and other digital database are improved. And even some courses are not limited to learn the method of information retrieval, but also learn how to use the conventional office software, graphic soft etc, in order to improve students’ information literacy.

If the mode of cultivating people by books is a traditional self-education mode, the education of information literacy in library is a breakthrough. It extends the connotation of the library educational function, makes the skills of information retrieval become the important part in fundamental educations. The libraries take the first step from “the second classroom” to “the first classroom”, begin to play a direct role in educating readers. It is of great significance for students to enhance the awareness of using literatures, to master the ability of information retrieval and improve self-learning ability.
Innovative Quality Education

With the change of the concept of higher education in the 21st century—from “teaching culture” to “learning culture”—academic library is not only the center of literature resources, but also becomes the experimental base of communication and innovation. Firstly, library begins to spread literature and information to readers with a variety of forms, deep mine user experience to achieve individualized service. For example, many academic libraries have set up a virtual reference platform in their website, provided mobile library service, and created library account in other social networking platforms. At the same time, many academic libraries have established special digital database, public classes’ video platform, taken participation in the construction and teaching of faculty. Secondly, the library constantly expands the types of collections, not only limited to printed and electronic books, journals and newspapers. For example, some academic libraries tried to provide laptops, digital cameras and conventional repair tools to students. At the same time, the new technology experience centers have been built in libraries, which normally provide 3D printers and related technical guidance service. In this center, students are encouraged to make and create; they can talk with other students with different specialties, and learn from practices.

In this educational mode, the library is an institution that is responsible for the dissemination of knowledge. The real meaning of “knowledge” is often ignored, that limiting the understanding of the essence and function of the library. Knowledge is not only an object, which reflects as literatures and databases, but also a process, or an experiment. As a process, knowledge is combined, associated, extracted and exchanged, to complete the conversion from information to knowledge. As an experiment, knowledge is the product of the exchange of users. The users can complete the discovery, interpretation, communication and organization of knowledge in practice. The library actually has changed from resource support system into platform where users can apply knowledge to the creation.

Conclusions

In 1919, as the founding father of modern libraries in China, Li Dazhao proposed that libraries were more educational vehicles than places of storing books. With the development of internet technology, libraries have rapidly developed. The information resource construction and service contents underwent profound changes. Meanwhile, the libraries play more and more important role in education. The educational functions of libraries have been evolved: on the basis of cultivating the readers’ ability to read continuously, the libraries have also to cultivate the readers’ information literacy ability and innovation literacy ability, to lay the foundation for lifelong learning goals. As libraries in the universities, the educational functions of academic libraries are more obvious. They should pay more attention to improve and develop their educational functions, to participate in teaching activities, and to support the universities to achieve educational goals.

References


