

## **The Place of Traditional Library in Higher Education in a Digital Age**

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**Abstract.** *The paper presents the place of traditional library in higher education in a digital age. In nations of the world, educational system is now digital but notwithstanding traditional library still have a place in our educational system.*

*The paper presents the History of Librarians; it further examined the concept of Traditional Library, this helps to reveal what traditional library entails. The paper concluded by looking into the place of Traditional Library in Higher Education in 21st Century.*

**Keywords:** *Traditional Library, Higher Education, Digital Age.*

### **Introduction**

Traditional library is an aged long center that gives emphasis on storage and preservation of physical items, particularly books and periodicals those in which librarian were a custodian of the library. It has built reading culture into learner because they have access to hard copies of different materials. The history of traditional library can be traced to 7<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. for the ‘royal contemplation’ of the Assyrian ruler Ashurbanipal located in Nineveh in modern day Iraq, the site included a trove of some 30,000 cuneiform tablets organized according to subject matter.

The goal of ancient libraries was simple: to collect knowledge, learn from it, and use it to make life better. Important advances in agriculture, architecture, medicine, art, manufacturing, war, and more were all disseminated via these vast collections. As the centuries went on people started to realize the benefits of having publicly accessible hubs of knowledge, and libraries became common place in cities and towns all over the globe.

Of course, everything changes with time, and that includes the function of libraries. Before the internet they were community centers where everyone was invited to sip at the cup of knowledge. But, as the influence of the internet grow in the 1990s and 2000s many speculated that there would no longer be a need for libraries- everything you could possibly want to know or learn would be just a mouse click away. But history has proved otherwise. Community libraries still flourish, more popular than ever. One reason is that not everything can be found on the internet.

And, despite the convenience of the Interned, people still enjoy visiting libraries. They find comfort within the warrens of shelves packed high with books and appreciate the smiling faces of libraries eager to help.

### **History of Libraries**

Before the advent of online search engines, people with questions commonly turned to the most reliable source they know: their local library. All you had to do was ask, and a reference librarian would answer your question directly or point you toward a book containing the information you sought. The interned has replaced this important services for many, you brick and mortar libraries

remain extremely popular, even in our ever evolving plugged in world. They are essential bastions of knowledge and much, much more.

The library concept dates back millennia. The first systematically organized library in the ancient Middle East was established in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century BCE by Assyrian ruler Ashurbanipal in Nineveh, in Contemporary Iraq. It contained approximately 30,000 cuneiform tablets assembled by topic. Many of the works were archival documents and scholarly texts, but there were also works of literature, including the ancient Epic of Gilgamesh. Like many bibliophiles, Ashurbanipal was very protective of the texts warns that potential thieves would face the wrath of the gods. Almost every great Civilization that followed built libraries, which were repositories of knowledge often gleaned from far and wide. Some were so large and comprehensive that their legend lives on today.

The library at Alexandria in Egypt, for example, is believed to have held perhaps as many as 700,000 documents from Greece, Persia, Egypt, India and other regions. It was so large that it had a branch facility at the nearby temple of Serapis. The world famous Bayt al-Hikmah (House of wisdom) in Baghdad, established in 830 CE, was another “super library” famous for a huge collection, and the 10<sup>th</sup> Century library of Caliph al-Hakem in Cordova, Spain, boasted more than 40,000 books. Rome and Athens also boasted expensive libraries, as did cultures in our parts of the world, such as China and the Mayan and Aztec Civilization of Central America.

The goal of ancient libraries was simple: to collect knowledge, learn from it, and use it to make life better. Important advances in agriculture, architecture, medicine, art, manufacturing, war, and more were all disseminated via these vast collections. As the centuries went on people started to realize the benefits of having publicly accessible hubs of knowledge, and libraries became common place in cities and towns all over the globe. Of course, everything changes with time, and that includes the function of libraries. Before the internet they were community centers where everyone was invited to sip at the cup of knowledge. But, as the influence of the internet grew in the 1990s and 2000s, many speculated that there would no longer be a need for libraries-everything you could possibly want to know or learn would be just a mouse click away. But history has proved otherwise. Community libraries still flourish, more popular than ever. One reason is that not everything can be found on the internet; and astonishing amount of information resources and ephemera remain available only on paper or other media at libraries. Sometimes, to get what you want, you have to physically go there; the internet isn't all-knowing.

And, despite the convenience of the internet, people still enjoy visiting libraries. They find comfort within the warrens of shelves packed high with books and appreciate the smiling faces of librarians eager to help. Parents bring their children to the library as a youthful rite of passage, while other people enjoy a literary repast in air. Conditioned comfort – all for free.

### **Traditional Library**

Traditional libraries give emphasis on storage and preservation of physical items, particularly books and periodicals, those in which librarian were a custodian of the library. Traditional library yet there is no accepted definition of the term. Traditional library is commonly defined as a physical space emphasizing physical collections and is often involved as a counter point to the modern or digital library. Traditional manual libraries are based on physical accessed (Singh 2003). The world's largest traditional library is in the U.S.A and that is the library of congress which contains and books in more than 460 different languages including English and more than 500 miles of shelves (Panel of Digital Libraries, 2001).

### **Features of Traditional Library**

All traditional libraries have some features.

These are:

- Generally libraries are the place to preserve and distribute the physical forms of resources, such as books and magazines, Journals, Periodicals/
- To maintain these resources with cataloguing and classification.

- Physical searching method is using to retrieve the resources
- Information is stored in physical format. The user may be borrowed the resources and make use of it.
- A traditional library consist details of available stock in books and subscription of periodical.

### **The Place of Traditional Library in Higher Education in 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

According to Nagata et al. (2007), it is generally agreed that most students use libraries for educational purposes. So students go to libraries to spend their time ( social interaction) and use computers but other go to libraries for study purpose, borrow course Books, use reference Book, or search for other study related materials. Traditional libraries provide them environment for study, silent rooms and rooms for group studies or discussion. Conventional or traditional manual libraries are based on physical container (example books) of information and this information is directly and also physically accessed (Singh 2003).

The world's largest conventional library is in the USA and that is the library of congress which contains approximately 120 million items, filings, and books in more than 460 different languages including, English and more than 500 miles of shelves (panel of Digital Library 2001).

According to Devchoudbary (2007) and Kumer and Srinivas (2004). In traditional libraries structured text queries are used for searching there are some manual routines/procedures, for examples if any student needs to search and issue a specific book, one needs to follow some predefined routines but in case of Digital Libraries complex interaction of query, navigation, browsing and social filters are used which helps the user to search material by using browser, enter keywords and get output of search query.

According to Yang (2011) traditional library is a center for information resources, culture, knowledge and experience, and a place for sciences and technology development. It is place that enhances reading interest among the people and a place for learning local wisdom and tradition art. It's also a references for conducting research.

Libraries not only facilitate research, they also save considerable money for their users and overall Institutions by offering a future of free, unlimited access to materials already purchased, at least in print. So, even though technology plays a significant role in our society, libraries are crucial because of the information they can provide to the general public. Even those who are not proficient in using technological tools (Kemp 2017).

The importance of having libraries is not decreasing, people are just choosing to access information differently. We cannot abandon the existence of libraries in schools or communities because they serve as the bridge between those who are well-informed and those who aren't.

### **Conclusion**

The place of traditional library in this digital age cannot be ignored. Traditional library is a long aged Institution which over the years had built reading culture, concentration, paper handling of books, ability to sit and read for a long period of time and orderly manner of doing things among the learners.

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