

THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN INCLUSIVE PROCESSES

Bilotserkivets Iryna

junior research scientist at Vasyl Sukhomlynsky
State Scientific Educational Library of Ukraine

Global processes of contemporary society in its development provoke the need for a new educational paradigm to be formed. The main component of such a paradigm should become *spirituality* as a most precious value under modern conditions. New strategies, methods, and forms of work with students are required in order to satisfy ever increasing necessity of developing our society in harmonious manner.

Libraries being a heritage of spiritual knowledge of the world, become now educational and informational centers, especially when today's circumstances – distant learning for students and remote work for office workers are widely introduced.

“The American Library Association affirms that equity, diversity, and inclusion are central ingredients in the promotion and practice of intellectual freedom. Libraries are essential to democracy and self-government, to personal development and social progress, and to every individual's inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To that end, libraries and library workers should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything that they do” [1]. Social conception of inclusion envisages equal possibilities in education for all citizens with their individual possibilities taken into consideration. New strategies in education and library sphere should concentrate on methods and technics that secure students' readiness of applying knowledge in real everyday life, in everyday problem-solving.

It is spirituality that is able to promote necessary psychological characteristics for each students to feel and act properly, among them: patience, diligence, tolerance, creativity and courage; and it is libraries that can secure fostering spirituality in children.

Today, the world faces tremendous problem concerning health of students and adults, and the statistic data on this problem requires additional attention and research; thus, inclusion is of vital importance for all strata of society at present.

The issue of education for children with special needs is under research of scientists of Special Pedagogy Institute (Kyiv, Ukraine), O. Krasiukova-Enns [2], A. Kolupaieva, E. Chornobai, V. Zasenko, M. Voron, T. Lorman [3] et al. The issues of spirituality and ways of spiritual values formation in students has studied academician I. Bekh [4], social problems and methods of their solving – I. Zvereva, Zh. Petrochko and others. Specialists all over the world are trying to make their contribution to decision-making in these fields – problems of children with special needs, politics of inclusive schools and libraries, educational and library environments, training of specialist in inclusion etc. Social inclusion in science communication has also been addressed by many scientists [5].

The main causes of various diseases and illnesses that stipulate special needs in children are, as a rule, unhealthy way of living, ecological situation and non-balanced diet, overworking etc. However, scientists argue that it is not illnesses that create obstacles in life activity but rather life conditions proposed by society and governments [6].

One of ways of solving this problem is to introduce valeological culture in schools, colleges, universities and libraries.

Psychological and educational work with students and their parents is required to cover per now especially most vulnerable categories of population: children and adults with special needs, their parents, poor families, ill and weak people and others.

Libraries as centers for children's leisure, spare time, study and independent research work, can contribute to cultivating habits of healthy life- style that can be useful all lifelong.

Libraries as institutions for informing, require innovations and usage of traditional and modern IT-technologies, as well as alternative ones, especially for children with special needs.

Comprehension of spiritual values can be considered as a condition for forming a healthy personality. Vasyl Sukhomlynsky, famous Ukrainian educator, viewed the school library a hub of school spiritual life. In his practice, a school library served as a means of pedagogical work with those students who required additional attention due to their psychological peculiarities – perception of the world, communication in families and with friends, useful or harmful habits. As it was stated, any problem always had a link to *insufficient spirituality*. “This department (a school library – **Auth.**) serves ... for collective listening ... and is the center for ... moral education of children”. World cognition, fostering useful habits – all these needs were covered by libraries. Spirituality is foremost morality + knowledge of the world.

Libraries are especially of value when *an individual educational approach* should be applied by teachers, – again we see possibilities for children with special needs – each of them needs an individual approach.

The educator Vasyl Sukhomlynsky was concerned with absence of books in libraries, stating that “it is like an illness when there are few books on the shelves” [7]. Certainly, at present, thank to IT-technologies and Internet we feel no reason to complain on insufficient information. However, progress can not be stopped, so further research is required in order to develop library sphere for our own future.

Clubs for music lovers, reading hobby and painting, artistic clubs, history study should be introduced, and libraries can become the place for such entertainment and study for children, especially those with special needs. For, as a contemporary science argues, art-therapy and art-technics are very helpful in overcoming various diseases, including those that provoke invalidity – a rather discursive term – for there are a lot of discussions on the issue – children with invalidity can be involved in different activities.

Among advantages offered by inclusive environments in educational institutions and libraries:

- children learn to behave not according to any standard;
- they learn to be inventive;

- they learn tolerance;
- they learn friendship and cooperation.

An aesthetic component of a library building should not be underestimated, for «a beautiful building housing a library will rekindle the passions of the students, and entice their to experience the library in its new glory as a resourceful learning space. Though a conclusion is yet to come on the benefits of space well designed and its effects on the student population, indications are very much leaning to the affirmative” [8].

In addition, other prospects for developing inclusive environments should be mentioned:

- accessibility of libraries, their resources and services;
- innovation and adaptive methods of servicing;
- creating in libraries conditions for providing consultative and psychologic assistance for children and/or their parents, for example – to form positive motivation;
- information-educational activities, including conferences, workshops etc. on assistance and other issues;
- interaction with local government bodies, educational institutions, social protection services, health protection institutions, civic organizations, children associations etc. [9].

Some research focused on inclusion in various social and cultural environments testifies that: “Many science communication activities intend to reach as many people as possible, and in this process of going mainstream, they may lose the under-represented groups that can only be reached with customized initiatives. Statistics of success such as number of visitors, views, ‘likes’, are often the only evaluation measurements of an activity/exhibition/festival/video of science communication. Yet, these metrics do not capture how diverse the publics actually are, nor they provide evidence that marginalized individuals and communities were reached” [5]. Thus, more research on inclusion in science communication for educators and librarians is needed.

Inclusion requires transformations of the content and the approaches in education and library sphere where individual features of children should be considered; unfortunately, a *large number of students and insufficient number of teachers and their assistants in classrooms* does not allow to conduct classes effectively. Today, innovations are in demand for promoting distant learning.

As a conclusion, there is a brief summary of the main points of the thesis:

Inclusion underlines the necessity of equal opportunities in the educational system and libraries for children with physic, social or emotional peculiarities [10], and spirituality is the core of necessary values formation in inclusive processes.

Social promotion and inclusion – these two postulates can be the benchmarks for libraries in the contemporary world.

We, educators and scientists, should remember the central statement in inclusion: *encouragement of differences* that can enrich our material and spiritual worlds.

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