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THE POTENTIAL OF INFORMATION AND LIBRARY CENTERS IN DOCUMENTING LOCAL HISTORY

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Abstract. This article examines the role and potential of information and library centers in documenting, preserving, and promoting local history. Local historical heritage is an important component of national cultural identity and includes archival documents, historical photographs, local newspapers, manuscripts, oral histories, and materials reflecting the development of a particular region. Information and library centers can contribute significantly to the preservation of these resources by collecting, organizing, cataloguing, and digitizing historical materials. The article also discusses the importance of information and communication technologies in creating electronic collections, improving access to local historical resources, and ensuring their long-term preservation. Strengthening cooperation between libraries, archives, museums, local researchers, and community members can further support the systematic documentation of local history.

Keywords: information and library center, local history, cultural heritage, historical documents, digitization, digital resources, documentary heritage, information and communication technologies.

Introduction

Local history plays an important role in preserving the cultural memory of a community and strengthening people's connection with their region. Every district and settlement has its own history, traditions, prominent individuals, architectural monuments, and significant events. Documenting this heritage helps preserve valuable information for future generations and creates opportunities for historical research and educational activities.In the modern information society, the preservation of local historical materials requires not only traditional library methods but also the effective use of digital technologies. Information and library centers have considerable potential in this area because they serve as institutions for collecting, organizing, preserving, and providing access to information resources.Through cooperation with local residents, researchers, educational institutions, museums, and archives, information and library centers can identify and collect materials that might otherwise be lost or remain inaccessible. These activities can contribute to the creation of a comprehensive documentary record of local history.The Role of Information and Library Centers in Preserving Local Historical Heritage Information and library centers can serve as important centers for the collection and preservation of local historical materials. Their collections may include books about the region, local newspapers, historical photographs, personal documents, biographies of notable residents, and publications related to local culture and traditions.One important area of activity is the identification of historical materials held by individuals and families. Old photographs, letters, memoirs, and documents can provide valuable evidence about the social, cultural, and economic development of a community. With the consent of their owners, such materials can be copied, described, and incorporated into local history collections.

Another significant activity is the collection of oral histories. Interviews with elderly residents, local historians, teachers, cultural figures, and other community members can preserve

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memories and experiences that may not be documented in official records. Recording and organizing these accounts helps broaden the range of available historical sources.

Information and library centers can also prepare bibliographic lists, thematic exhibitions, information guides, and presentations dedicated to important local events and notable personalities. These initiatives make local historical knowledge more accessible and encourage public interest in regional heritage.

Opportunities for Digitizing Historical Sources

Digital technologies provide new opportunities for the preservation and dissemination of local historical materials. Scanning documents, photographs, newspapers, and other printed resources allows libraries to create digital copies and reduce the need to handle fragile originals.

Digitization can be organized in several stages. First, historical materials are identified and selected according to their significance, condition, and relevance to local history. Second, the materials are scanned or photographed at an appropriate quality. Third, digital files are named, described, classified, and stored systematically. Finally, access conditions are established to ensure that users can find and consult the materials efficiently.

Creating electronic collections is particularly valuable for materials that are rare, fragile, or difficult to access. Digital copies can support research, educational projects, virtual exhibitions, online publications, and presentations about local history.

Accurate metadata is essential for making digital resources useful. Each item should, where possible, include information such as its title, date, creator, subject, place of origin, source, and a brief description. Consistent metadata improves searchability and helps researchers understand the context and significance of historical materials.

At the same time, digitization requires careful attention to copyright, privacy, consent, and the authenticity of historical records. Digital copies should be stored securely, backed up regularly, and checked to ensure that files remain accessible over time. Digitization does not replace the preservation of original documents; rather, it complements traditional preservation methods and expands access to historical information.

The Importance of Community Cooperation

Successful documentation of local history depends on cooperation between information and library centers and the wider community. Local residents often possess valuable historical photographs, family archives, personal recollections, and other materials that are not available in institutional collections.

Libraries can encourage community participation by organizing local history campaigns, exhibitions, interviews, public meetings, and projects inviting residents to share information about their area. Such activities can help identify previously unknown sources and strengthen public awareness of the importance of preserving historical heritage.Cooperation with archives, museums, educational institutions, and local researchers can also improve the quality and reliability of collected information. By sharing expertise and coordinating their activities, these institutions can reduce duplication, improve descriptions of historical sources, and make local history resources more accessible.For district information and library centers, this approach creates opportunities to document local development in a systematic way and to present regional history through both traditional and digital formats.

Conclusion

Information and library centers have significant potential to contribute to the documentation and preservation of local history. By collecting historical documents, photographs, local publications, oral histories, and other materials, they help safeguard the documentary heritage of their communities.

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The use of information and communication technologies makes it possible to create digital collections, improve access to historical resources, and support research and educational activities. However, effective documentation requires systematic organization, reliable descriptions, secure digital storage, and cooperation with community members and relevant institutions.The development of local history collections can strengthen cultural identity, preserve the memory of previous generations, and provide valuable resources for future researchers. Therefore, expanding the role of information and library centers in documenting local history is an important direction for the development of modern library services.

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