**Importance of Diversity & Information Collection in the Library and the need of Communication and Leadership in Promoting them**

**Abstract**

Diversity in the library is about including people from different social and ethnic backgrounds. It is essential because it helps children and young adults to develop critical thinking as well as to develop different literacies. These days, diversity is on the rise in the United States. Children whose first language is other than English, are growing faster. They are about a quarter of the population of children under age 9. Libraries should provide print and digital resources for young children as well as for adults. Libraries need to connect and communicate with the diverse families in the community and encourage them to use services provided by the library.  Libraries have to adapt story times and other activities to meet the requirements of families who speak different languages. Leaders and Managers of the libraries need to think critically to have multi language books, services and activities in the library. They need to communicate and make sure diverse families feel welcome in their library environment.

**Introduction**

Diversity is the understanding that each individual is unique. It recognizes the individual differences in regards to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religion and political beliefs. Children as well as young adults experience diversity on a regular basis while interacting with others. Children experience it in school or around their neighborhood. It is important that they learn and know a variety of cultures around the world. Stories from book collections help children to understand their own culture as well as the cultures of others. Libraries are considered as the most trusted place. So, managers and leaders of the library have a very important role to play in fulfilling the goal of the library by serving the diverse community with proper information collection and services.

An essential part of serving the diverse community is to understand the needs of their community.  The fundamental goal and mission of the library is to provide quality material and services that fulfill educational, informational, cultural and recreational needs of the community they serve. The library is the main source of helping children as well as teens to make cross-cultural connections and develop the tools and skills necessary to function in a diverse society. Diversity is beneficial not only because it serves the diverse communities of patrons but also because organizations that encourage diversity are more successful. Communicating with its users about the diverse services, programs and activities is very necessary. Because of that patrons find out and able to use those services and programs.

**Promoting Diversity and Information Collections**

The American Library Association recognizes the needs for access to library by all people, especially those people who may have economic stress, cultural isolation, physical barrier, gender identity, discrimination on the basis of appearance, immigrant status, employment and etc. Libraries work together with Community based organizations through outreach events and programs to reach people in the community. It is essential that managers from the library understand diversity and information collection issues and they should be motivated to solve those issues. Management must set, enforce, promote policies to value diversity at every level of the library organization. The American Library Association (ALA) explains different practices to help libraries to be successful. Libraries need to offer new collections of books that present cultural experiences across communities. Also, they need to provide library service support at community events.  Books and other resources need to provide information, interest and enlightenment for all the people of the community that the library serves. Libraries need to select, maintain and support books by diverse authors and creators. Collection of material should be done according to professional standards.

 Assessment is one of the key components of successful diversity initiatives. Libraries need to implement assessment prior to implementing a diversity plan, so that libraries can identify the problem if they find any. A Muslim woman participating in the Urban Library Program mentioned that many veiled women approached her to seek her help. Those women informed her that they felt comfortable reaching out to her. They usually didn’t go to get help from others. Seeing her in the library made them feel comfortable and welcome. So, hiring a diverse workforce is certainly a positive step. Libraries should also provide development opportunities for their employees. So, they stay in their job for a longer period of time doing their work in the library and serving a diverse community.

Managers and Leaders of the library need to follow strategies for promoting Diversity and Information collection in all the libraries. Here are a few strategies used to promote diversity in school libraries.

**Catalogue Books Based on Topic**- Librarians need to know the collections of books and other materials they are having or missing. So, they can find it by checking a catalogue. And they can add the books and other materials that are missing in the library collection.

**Introduce Diverse Programming**- Librarians encourage diverse programming in the library. They should provide interactive workshops and also invite diverse guests to visit and talk to their students.

**Expand Learning Materials**- Librarian can build an inclusive digital media atmosphere that helps diverse students. For example, in video presentations, they can add captions which will be very helpful for diverse students to understand the content of the video.

**Emphasize Diverse Material in the Library***-*It is important for librarians to show their commitment towards diversity. So, students feel comfortable in explaining their needs. It is essential that librarians should weed any problematic materials that they are having in the library. California’s State Department of Education gives a clear path for evaluation of new material about racism and sexism. Libraries need to scan the book’s illustration and read for problematic portrayals of marginalized populations. Librarians need to pay attention and focus on the characters' interaction and role of protagonist. One of the main things, librarians need to figure out is how a student's thought would be affected by the text of the book. They also have to find out what is the author's point of view and his use of language in the book.  They also need to evaluate literacy, historical and cultural values of the text.

**Diversifying the Digital and Physical Library Spaces**- Libraries also need to diversify in the use of technology as well as physical spaces in the library.

**Diversity and Communication with the library users**

Libraries should communicate with diverse families about the facilities libraries are providing to them. Libraries need to understand the community they are serving. Also, they should send the representative from the library to events and fairs to meet the members of the families in person. So, they can advertise about the services and facilities of the library. Also, the library should make a committee to spread the resources in different languages and about different services they are offering. They have to check if they are reaching all the population in that community. They can promote library services through communication channels organized by different groups of people. They can provide information collection and materials that reflect diverse communities. Libraries need to apply different strategies. One of them is to build a diverse staff so that people can see themselves in the administration, management and delivery of library services. It is important that all types of libraries continue to be innovative and resourceful. Diversity and varieties of information collection plays a crucial role in the success of all the libraries, especially Public libraries. Libraries can work to bring communities together through outreach and partnership at cultural events and programs. As libraries support diversity, librarians need to adopt and support new services to attract diverse users. UNCG initiated a new program as the Post MLS Diversity Resident Librarian program to support diversity. The role of Librarian is to create a welcoming and inclusive library environment throughout the year. Management also needs to listen to their staff. Staff have to feel that their voices and differences are important and carry values to their organization. Communicating with library users is an essential part of librarian work. The main duty of a librarian is to provide services to the users and also to provide requested information. It is more important to know the library user’s needs and to provide them a good service.

**Conclusion**

Diversity benefits everyone in the library. Especially in public libraries where people come to gain information from different parts of their communities. Public libraries need to be more active to diversify their workforces by recruiting, training and retaining diverse staff as well as adding more diverse books by diverse authors. It is critical to develop a public library workforce more accurate because it reflects diverse backgrounds which public libraries serve. Management needs to communicate and advertise about their services and programs of the Public Library to the general public. So, patrons can come and take benefits from the library. In this way, the main goal and mission of the library is fulfilled and the library will be successful.

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