

Investigating the Needs of Library Members of Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz City in Rendering Education for Non-Book/Electronic Material Services

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Abstract

Purpose: The children and young adults' libraries can play an effective role aside the formal educational system, especially when the school libraries are weak in a region. This study aims to investigate the need for educational programs for library members of institute for the intellectual development of children and young adults in Ahvaz regarding provision of non-book/electronic materials services. **Method:** This research is an analytical survey with an applied purpose. An organized questionnaire was used for collecting information. The results were presented using descriptive statistics. The research community consists of two groups of managers (7 people) and members of the libraries of the intellectual development center for children and adolescents in Ahvaz (172 people). **Results:** The findings showed that 33.7% of the members go to the library twice a week and 54.07% of them use library for personal study. Among them, 30.81% were not satisfied with library resources. 6.65% of the members needed education to use online search services on the Internet, and 4.97% needed education for offline services. **Conclusion:** The results showed that there are not many non-book materials such as slides and films, as well as electronic services such as databases in the libraries of the intellectual development of children and young adults in Ahvaz. In some libraries it is possible to provide non-book materials and electronic services in terms of space and facilities. But other libraries do not have the facilities. Therefore the libraries aside the schools need to provide educational workshops for students of the schools and their members. Special emphasis must be placed on the planning for these services for children libraries.

Keywords: Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults Institute, Ahvaz – children libraries, Non-book materials/ electronic services

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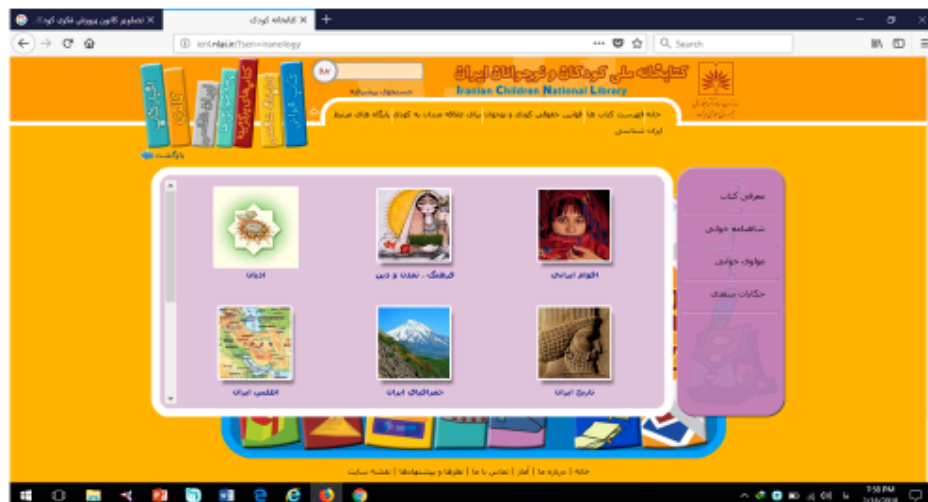
Introduction

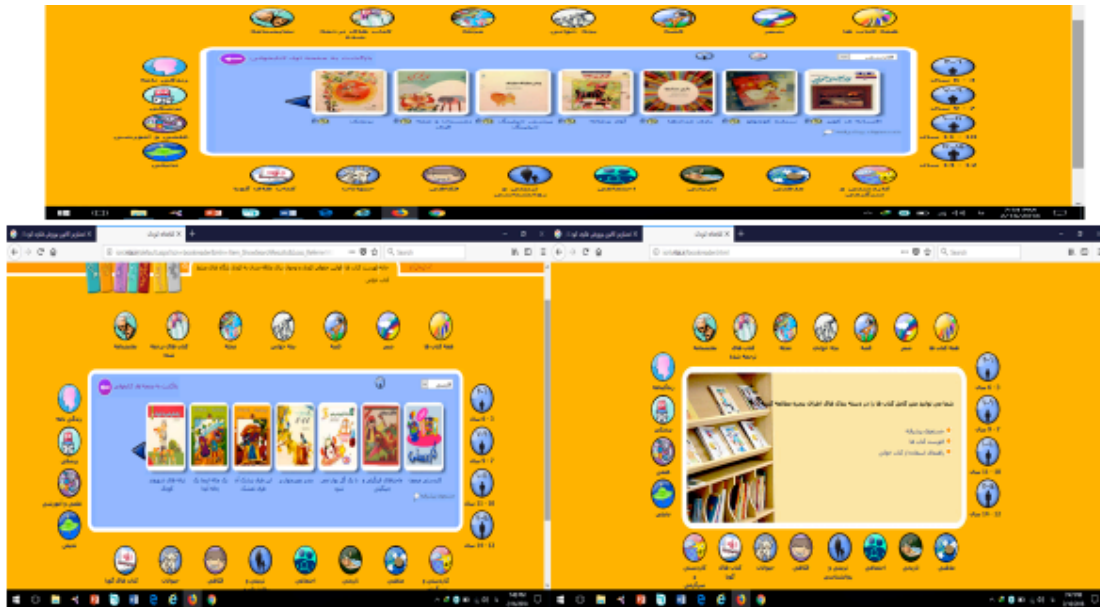
In the past, libraries were only considered as places for keeping books and librarians as keepers of books. Over time, with the sophistication of knowledge and its communication tools, the process of knowledge transfer has become increasingly important. So, this has become a major concern of the experts of information science and librarians to identify and disseminate appropriate information.

One of the most desirable methods for accessing information is using non-book materials and services in libraries (Bagheri, 2006). Non-book sources are a major part of library services. These sources are very effective in formal and non-formal education and can provide users with invaluable real experiences (Azadeh et al., 2010). Their Abundant productions, ease of access and lower costs compared to printed sources have made these resources very popular among users. The electronic resources have become an integral part of all libraries and the libraries are trying to access these resources more and more (Bagheri, 2006).

Both domestic and international studies conducted in this area demonstrate the key role of the non-book materials and services. Sohrabzadeh et al. (2015) in their research entitled “the perception of children aged 7-14 from the user interface of the Iranian Children's National Library” showed that these children have different levels of perception of the user interface of the Iranian Children's National Library. They concluded that the home page of the National Library website should be designed in a way to provide children of different age groups with easy access to the available sources.

National Library of Iran Digital Library for Children





National Library of Iran- digital library for Children -user interface with icons for age groups and kinds of literature.

Khodami et al. (2014) in their research entitled “the feasibility of providing electronic reference services in the public libraries of Tehran city” found that the major problems in the establishment of electronic reference services in public libraries affiliated with the Iran Public Libraries Foundation include: lack of necessary IT equipment, facilities and infrastructures, lack of adequate budget, lack of specialized staff and finally, librarians’ unwillingness to provide electronic reference services.

Ehsani (2009), in a research entitled “comparing the reading preferences of the guidance school students (“D” age group) in Ahwaz with the books available at the Central Library of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults during 1996-2006. She concluded that in many sub-categories, there was no correlation between the students’ reading preferences and the frequency of books available at the central library. This was more evident in topics such as ancient literature: realism (novel); fantasy; poetry; social sciences; experimental sciences; biographies; art, games and entertainment and reference books.

Kaur and Verma (2009) investigated the use and impact of electronic journals in the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi. Their results showed that the usage of e-journals was growing increasingly and this was due to the increasing awareness of users about library services and resources and ease of access to these resources at various locations (24-hour access at the college, at the library, department and computer center).

In 2006, Cavazos conducted a study on the reading interests of talented middle school boys. He showed that teachers have conducted special educational programs, through which they have had a huge impact on increasing the reading preferences of these boys and consequently, their overall reading time. He also pointed out that talented

and gifted teenagers generally visit large libraries and bookstores to meet their study needs. They also select their favorite books very carefully (Cavazos, 2006).

Bagheri (2006), in her master's thesis entitled "investigating the application of non-book materials available at the academic libraries of the Islamic Azad University" showed that 56% of these libraries had non-book materials and most of the materials were used for research and teaching purposes.

Hopper (2005) conducted a research entitled "What are teenagers reading? Adolescent fiction reading habits and reading choices". He examined 707 school students aged between 11 and 15 in the south-west of England and concluded that the personal experiences of the subjects as well as their educational qualifications affect their reading attitudes and ultimately leads to better choices.

Considering the significant educational role of non-book materials and services in providing recent educational resources for the future generations, these materials and services must be provided for the members of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. Therefore, this study investigated the needs of the members of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz in provision of non-book materials and services. In this regard, first the needs of the users of these libraries for non-book materials and services were assessed. Then the capacity of the libraries in providing these materials and services was evaluated and finally, appropriate solutions and strategies were offered to provide the materials and services.

Research questions:

1. How is the current status of the staff, members and libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz?
2. Do the relevant bodies have adequate funds to provide non-book materials and services in these libraries?
3. Is there enough space in these libraries for establishment of non-book materials?
4. How well are these libraries equipped with tools, methods, equipment and facilities for providing non-book materials and services?
5. How well are these libraries supplied with the required resources?
6. What are the purposes and motives of the members from visiting the library?
7. Which form of non-book service resources meets the most information needs of the members?
8. Do the librarians of these libraries have the adequate knowledge to use non-book materials and services and offer them to the visitors?
9. What types of trainings are provided by the librarian to familiarize members with non-book sources?
10. What are the main problems of the members regarding their access to their information needs?

Methodology

This was an applied-analytical survey. The number of libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz was 7 and

all the libraries were studied. These libraries had 8118 members. The normal sampling method was used (Aria-Nejad, 1995) and its formula is presented below. In this formula, a sample of 30 or more individuals was considered for each age group. Finally the sample size was determined as 200 and a total of 172 questionnaires were collected from the participants.

$$n = \left(\frac{Z \frac{\alpha}{2} \delta}{e} \right)^2$$

Two questionnaires were used to collect data. The first questionnaire was designed to be completed by the authorities of the libraries. It included 22 questions and consisted of two parts. The first part (questions 1-7) was associated with the demographic information of the authorities. The second part (questions 8-22) assessed the status of the libraries in terms of the number of librarians, their educational qualifications, different parts of the libraries, the number of Persian and Latin books, the frequency of using non-book materials and services, the status of spaces and facilities and allocated budget. The second questionnaire was designed to be completed by the members of the libraries and included 19 questions. This questionnaire included questions about the demographic information of the users, their educational qualifications, their enthusiasm and their purpose of visiting the library, their level of satisfaction with the resources and their need for non-book materials and services. The face validity of the questionnaire was measured by experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient and it was 0.75. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 18 software.

Results & Discussion

After distributing 200 questionnaires, a total of 172 questionnaires (86%) were collected. According to the results, 54.65% of the participants were female and 45.35% of them were male.

The authorities of the studied libraries were all female (100%), among which 71% aged 30-40 years and had bachelor degrees. All the authorities have non-library degrees (Table 1). Evidence showed that all the librarians undergo ICDL training courses, at the beginning of their recruitment. They can learn the basics of computer and this helps them using many non-book materials.

Table 1: The demographic characteristics of the authorities of the studied libraries

Variables		No.	%
Gender	Female	7	100
	Male	0	0
Age group	30-40	5	71
	41-50	2	29
Academic degree	Bachelor degree	5	71
	Master degree	2	29
Field of Study	Librarianship degree	0	0
	Non-library degree	7	100

The results of the first question showed that the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz were in relatively poor condition in terms of the status of their non-book materials (Table 2). The results are consistent with the study of Majidi (2008). He also concluded that the public libraries of Ahvaz do not offer non-book materials such as slides, videos, filmstrips, microforms, cassette tapes, discs, CDs, VCDs and electronic services like the internet; and other sources such as atlases and maps are used very rarely. The results of this question are not consistent with the results of the study of Kaur and Verma (2009).

Findings of the second question showed that the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz did not provide sufficient funds to their libraries on a regular basis. The results of this question are consistent with the results of the studies of Khodami et al. (2014) and Tavakoli (2001). Tavakoli argued that lack of visual-auditory equipment in the central libraries of public Iranian universities is a major problem and the main reason is inadequate budget allocated to these libraries.

Table2: the frequency of non-book materials in the libraries

Materials	The frequency distribution of non-book materials in libraries										Total
	Very high		High		Mediocre		Low		Very low		
	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	
Video	0	0	0	0	2.6	2	3.9	3	2.6	2	7
Filmstrips	1.3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.79	6	7
Microforms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9.09	7	7
Microfiche	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9.09	7	7
Cassette tapes	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.9	3	5.18	4	7
Discs	0	0	0	0	1.3	1	0	0	7.79	6	7
CDs	0	0	0	0	2.6	2	2.6	2	3.9	3	7
VCDs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9.09	7	7
Slides	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9.09	7	7
Sources recorded on CD	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.6	2	6.49	5	7
Non-printed materials	0	0	0	0	1.3	1	1.3	1	6.49	5	7
Total	1.3	1	0	0	7.8	6	14.3	11	76.6	59	77

The results of the third question showed that most of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz did not have enough space for establishment and provision of non-book materials and services. Majidi (2008) also concluded that only few of the public libraries of Ahvaz have suitable space for establishment of non-book materials and services. The results of this question are in line with the results of Majidi.

Regarding the fourth question, according to the Table 3, only 14% of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz were well equipped with tools, methods, equipment and facilities for providing non-book materials and services. Tavakoli (2001) obtained similar results and argued that lack of visual-auditory equipment in the central libraries of public Iranian universities is a major problem. These results are consistent with the results obtained in this question.

Table 3: The frequency distribution of the equipment and facilities available in the studied libraries for utilizing non-book resources

Statistical indicators	The frequency distribution of the equipment and facilities available in the studied libraries for utilizing non-book resources					Total
	Very low	Low	Mediocre	High	Very high	
Frequency	3	1	2	1	0	7
Percentage	43	14	29	14	0	100

Regarding the fifth question, as Table 4 shows only a small percentage (about 7%) of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz were well supplied with the required resources. In their study, in the Indian Institute of Technology, Kaur and Verma (2009) concluded that library visitors were significantly satisfied with the available resources, which is not consistent with the results of the present question.

Table 4: The frequency distribution of the respondents in terms of their satisfaction with the resources available at the studied libraries

Statistical indicators	Satisfaction with the library resources						Total
	Very low	Low	Mediocre	High	Very high	No response	
Frequency	45	53	44	17	12	1	172
Percentage	26.16	30.81	25.58	9.89	6.98	0.58	100

Regarding the sixth question, as Figure 1 shows a high percentage of the visitors had visited the libraries for personal interest and to study new sources.

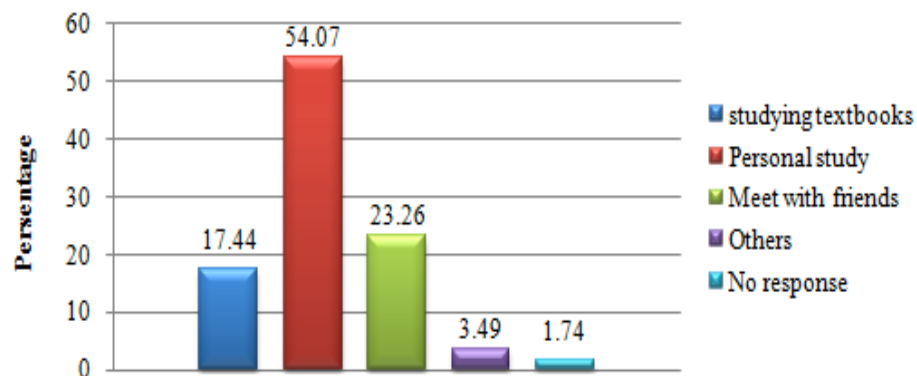


Figure1: purpose of members by visiting Library

Regarding the seventh question, based on the Table 5 and Table 6, CDs, VCDs and online and offline search services were the first priorities of the visitors of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz. A two-way ANOVA test was used to determine the relationship between research variables. Based on the results, there was a significant difference between the variables at the 1% significance level 0.000 (Table 5). The results of this question are in line with the results of Majidi (2008) who found that users of Ahvaz public libraries require non-books materials and services. However, he found that optical discs, videos and online and offline search services were the first priorities of the users.

Table 5: Two-way ANOVA test conducted to determine the necessity of providing

Items					95% confidence interval			
	No.	Mean	SD	Error	Lower bound	Upper bound	Min	Max
Online search services	172	2.33	1.985	0.151	2.03	2.63	1	32
Offline search services	172	3.38	1.930	0.147	3.09	3.67	1	4
Sharing and utilizing databases and databanks	172	4.85	2.163	0.165	4.52	5.17	1	4
Borrowing videos, filmstrips and microforms	172	6.01	2.445	0.186	5.64	6.38	1	4
Borrowing Discs and CDs	172	4.40	1.850	0.141	4.12	4.67	1	5
Borrowing VCDs	172	4.79	2.095	0.160	4.48	5.11	1	5
Borrowing slides	171	7.49	1.819	0.139	7.21	7.76	1	5
Borrowing e-resources recorded on CD	172	5.42	2.487	0.190	5.04	5.79	1	5
Utilizing printed non-book materials such as maps, atlases, etc.	172	6.35	2.257	0.172	6.01	6.69	1	5
Total	1547	5.00	2.579	0.066	4.87	5.13	1	32

Table 6: Two-way ANOVA test conducted to determine the necessity of providing non-book services to meet the information needs

	Cumulative frequency	R	SST	Frequency	Sig.
Intergroup variance	3323.944	8	415.493	91.814	0.000
Intergroup variance	6960.056	1538	4.525		
Total	10284.000	1546			

Based on the results of Table 7, the findings of the eighth question showed that most of the librarians had an average and basic knowledge in terms of using non-book materials and services. Tavakoli (2001) achieved similar results in his research. He found that in the central libraries of public Iranian universities, lack of expert human resources and lack of visual-auditory equipment were the most important problems. These results are also consistent with the results of Khodami et al. (2014).

Table 7: The frequency distribution of the respondents regarding the librarians' knowledge of non-book materials

Statistical indicators	The librarians' knowledge of non-book materials					Total
	Very low	Low	Mediocre	High	Very high	
Frequency	11	4.9	63	37	12	172
Percentage	6.4	28.5	36.6	21.5	7	100

Regarding the ninth question, the results of Table 8 showed that the librarians did not provide appropriate training to the members about the non-book materials. Majidi (2008) also found that the public libraries of Ahwaz offer no training to their members on using these materials. This is consistent with the results of the study of Majidi.

Table 8: The frequency distribution of the respondents regarding the provision of trainings by the librarians

Statistical indicators	The level of trainings provided by the librarians					Total
	Very low	Low	Mediocre	High	Very high	
Frequency	52	25	49	37	9	172
Percentage	30.2	14.5	28.5	21.5	5.2	100

The results of the tenth question indicated that the most important problems raised by the respondents regarding their access to their information needs included problems associated with finding information, lack of adequate non-book materials and lack of adequate time for searching information, respectively. In addition, lack of proper service provision by librarians was among the least important problems (Table 9).

Table 9: The frequency distribution of the respondents regarding the problems restricting access to information needs

	First priority		No response		Eighth priority		Seventh priority		Sixth priority		Fifth priority		Fourth priority		Third priority		Second priority		Total
	F%	F	F%	F	F%	F	F%	F	F%	F	F%	F	F%	F	F%	F	F%	F	
Problems associated with finding information																			
Lack of adequate non-book materials	0	0	0.0	1	0.2	3	0.00	0	0.29	4	0.36	5	0.87	12	1.23	17	9.45	13	172
Lack of adequate time for searching information	0.0	1	0.2	3	0.7	10	1.23	17	1.60	22	2.03	28	2.25	31	3.92	54	0.44	6	172
Limited working hours of libraries	0.0	1	0.2	4	0.6	9	1.45	20	1.89	26	1.74	24	3.05	42	2.54	35	0.80	11	172
Inappropriate behaviors of librarians	0.7	10	7.2	10	1.2	17	0.94	13	0.72	10	0.87	12	0.29	4	0.29	4	0.14	2	172
Lack of awareness of the above resources	0.2	4	0.5	7	1.0	14	1.23	17	1.67	23	3.34	46	2.25	31	1.74	24	0.44	6	172
Lack of proper service provision by librarians	0.7	10	0.73	10	4.6	64	2.25	31	1.23	17	1.09	15	1.09	15	0.58	8	0.14	2	172
Lack of familiarity with library software	0.2	3	0.2	3	1.6	23	1.89	26	2.69	37	1.67	23	2.03	28	1.23	17	0.87	12	172
Physical problems of library building (lighting, ventilation etc.)	0.3	5	2.3	33	1.8	26	3.19	44	1.96	27	0.94	13	0.65	9	0.87	12	0.20	3	172
Total		17		17		17		17		17		17		17		17		17	1376
		2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	

F is: Frequency & F% is: Percentage of frequency

The results showed that the 7 studied libraries had significant differences in terms of space, the number of visitors and the number of available books. The results of the first questionnaire represented the capacities of the libraries in terms of establishment of such materials and services. The results of the second questionnaire represented users' need to non-book materials and services.

Considering that the users of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz are children and adolescents, non-books materials, especially optical discs or Internet services, can positively affect their educational achievements.

Findings show that new sources are not provided on a regular basis, and, given the limited space available at these libraries, it is impossible to collect all the resources needed for all users. Therefore, non-book materials and services, such as compact discs and other electronic resources that contain information in a compact form (e.g. online and offline Internet search services) can meet these expectations to some extent.

Based on the results, some of the studied libraries were rich in terms of resources to some extent. In addition, users supported the establishment of non-book materials and services in libraries and found them highly effective in their academic achievements. The results showed that some of the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz were in an acceptable condition in terms of the number of books. However, many libraries lacked appropriate books, Latin books and new books, especially in sciences such as computer sciences that are constantly evolving.

Computers were used for searching information in the libraries and all the librarians were able to work with computers.

Considering the educational status of the users of the studied libraries and their views on the use of non-book materials and services, it can be concluded that they are in grave need of establishment for such services.

Conclusion

The results showed that there were not many non-book materials such as slides, videos as well as e-services such as the databases via Internet in the libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz. Some libraries had desirable conditions in terms of providing appropriate facilities, materials and training in the area of non-book services; however, other libraries did not possess needed potentials and facilities to provide such services. Therefore, it is necessary to organize educational programs and workshops for teaching members of these libraries to better utilize non-book/electronic sources.

In addition, all the managers of libraries of the Iranian Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults of Ahvaz are recommended to organize training courses for all librarians, especially for educated ones in order to teach them the use of non-book materials and services, especially online search services. This

way, each library will have at least one specialized librarian who is fully familiar with these services and can help the members to use these services.

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