

## Holistic approach: Soul of sustainable library services

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### Abstract

This paper attempts to describe the need of a holistic approach in academic libraries. Experience based on more than twenty five years of library services specially in the academic sector and position of readers particularly students thought crept in mind to narrate the things and bring to the notice of library professionals and academicians so that their mind will divert towards this theme. It may help to create effective awareness among readers, to be more critical and promote users to learn more from the library. Considering this need some aspects of holistic approach are discussed in the paper and accordingly some suggestions are given such as appreciation of library employees for good services, readers cooperation, staff involvement etc.

**Keywords:** Holistic approach, Readers, Library staff, Services, Personality development.

### Introduction

Dictionary meaning of holistic approach is dealing with or treating a whole of something and not just only a part. It means taking care of something totally in all aspects.

Holistic approach encompasses maximum possible aspect that helps to be a complete personality in respect of education, culture, social, productive to contribute for the well being of society at national and international level. This approach is comprehensive as it covers maximum possible things needed for overall development of an individual. Holistic approach is an individual philosophy based on the criteria or parameter that each aspect finds identity, meaning and purpose in life through connection to the community, natural world and human values. It is the soul of any activity that help to bring people together on a common platform. According to Kshama Pandey and Niitu Singh (2013) holistic vision includes a sense of whole person who is connected to his or her surrounding context and environment. Library staff should have keen interest in engaging and developing the whole reader. Different could be physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. (<https://www.co.in> accessed on 10/5/2019).

Since Holistic Approach is an effective means, it deals all aspects about overall development of individual thus it helps to identify the appropriate research problem. Therefore identification of correct research problems leads to find feasible measures to overcome obstacles which is the ultimate aim of any research.

Strategy of Holistic Approach involves understanding a system. Attempt to develop and maintain multiple perspectives and further apply holistic approach towards complete promotion of an individual and group of people.

### Benefits of Holistic Approach

Holistic approach helps to strengthen healthy relations between service providers and service seekers. It identifies strength, weakness, interest, reluctant nature, attitude etc. of the individual and group of people and controlling measures can be applied. Holistic approach also changes the mindset of service provider and transforms them to more generous,

kind and helpful to one and all and thus they contribute more in their respective areas.

### Review of Literature

Belousa I and Stakle A (2004) have discussed importance of holistic approach in higher education. According to them it helps in understanding of person and sustainable development of society and leads in creating sense of democracy in community.

Miller R (2000a) stated that holistic education is concerned with life experiences, not with narrow defined 'basic skills'. This means holistic approach is more than education.

Patel N V (2003) opinions, holistic approach develops students to be critical, confident and independent. It aims to make learning a process of self improvement and helps to recognise self in social context.

D'souza Anjali (2017) advocated in 'whole person education: An Indian perspective' - education should not be limited to make students academically sound but it should be balanced healthy psychology, emotionally and physically.

Taking into consideration aspect of holistic approach and review of above studies researcher feels that the concept of holistic approach could be applied through libraries in more effective way and that too with large number of readers specially students. Because libraries have key role in educating users and besides libraries are open for more hours than class room teaching. Library possesses huge diversified collection and this enables users to choose books of their interest. Motivation to readers to visit library and staff attachment could strengthen holistic approach effectively.

### Libraries and Holistic Approach

Libraries irrespective of their types are fundamentally established for intellectual development of reader's. It is the prime responsibility of all libraries. Technically focusing only on routine and formal services, being remaining in framework of rules, regulations, discipline these all are not

enough for overall personality development of readers. Need based services based on moral values, full involvement, devotion, attachment, emotional and physical support towards readers makes big difference. This approach gives feel of visit library in readers.

Library staff plays an important role. Sincere, effective and maximum services with full concentration on readers lead to develop holistic approach. This holistic approach develops readers to be critical, confident and independent. Thus success of library depends upon holistic approach. Staff have to play crucial role. Priority is to be given for need based services. Besides they have to make library staff aware about all possible ways where reader's overall development could be achieved. Library staff should act like guiding torch. Whole hearted services with personal touch are more important as it makes positive impact on users. Otherwise in the age of ICT readers get themselves involves and busy in browsing data on electronic devices like android phones, tabs, laptops etc. and at the end they do not get sufficient information as per their expectations.

#### **Library Staff needs to Develop Holistic Approach**

In present decade, higher education system has renamed academic libraries to Learning Resource Centre'. Purpose behind this change is to reintroduce role of library from library to learning resource centre. Previously the term library seems to be taken more store house of reading resources than the services. Where as new name 'learning resource centre' emphasis is given on learning of readers than the caring of store house of knowledge. It is accepted that in real sense and not limited to store house. The term 'learning' itself promote role of academic library from active to proactive. That is why it is prime responsibility of the librarian including his/her staff to be more professional, develop skill and quality of library services, push boundaries of self knowledge and show empathy towards readers. There is need to make change in the way of working, timings, methodology, reorganise of resources and disseminate services. Now the role of library not remained limited like previous, to take care of resources, provide services based on demand, acquire new resources after recommendations by concern faculty, submit report to the office for audit purpose and so on.

Presently library staff is continuously required to browse literature, check and highlight it, prepare new database, rearrange it and thus bring to the notice of users effectively. They have to be proactive, do not wait for the demand from users. Add new services to the existing ones and keep the library environment more healthy academic and vibrant.

To bring this new change library staff need to develop holistic approach. Holistic approach aims at helping students to be most that they can be. It relates with the development of every users social, intellectual, emotional, creative and spiritual power. It helps to engage students in teaching learning process and encourage individual. Fundamental purpose behind this consists of whole person education through library services and resources who is

connected to his or her surrounding and environment. In holistic approach emphasis is given not only on preparing the reader good learner and academically sound but also help him to be more balanced and fit physically, psychologically and emotionally.

#### **Objectives of Holistic Approach in Library**

1. Create effective awareness among readers about library content.
2. Help readers to be critical learners.
3. Promote user to describe the concept what they have learned.

#### **What library staff and readers need to develop for Holistic Approach?**

Regularity in duties, discipline, and devotion, interest in learning, attachment and commitment towards readers... etc are needed for library staff. This will definitely enable them to fulfil basic objectives of the library and to bear fruitful results.

Library resources plays an important role in improving knowledge of readers and library staff. Resources may be printed or in digital form are the fundamental assets of library. Careful detailed Classification, systematic organisation of resources, indexing with alternative word and terms helps to enhance the overall access of resources.

Help readers to be critical learner's needs proper understanding of the concepts, its applications and justification for its use. Reader's role is also equally important. They should realize the effect of competition in the process of development of the nation. Provision of periodic counselling, motivation, and thoughtful study helps to develop critical learning and further critical learning helps to develop the sound knowledge.

Keeping library users at the centre it will be better if library organise periodic sessions for users to express their views about what they have learned from library. This practice will help to know the strengths and shortcomings of library content and services. An attempt towards this direction may be mile stone to understand need of the users and then build up of diversified collection with quality. It will enable users to describe and explain concepts and ideas with confidence on their own.

Now a day's govt policy has been diverted towards encouragement of open education and thus new Open Universities are coming up to democratize whole education system at mass level. Academic libraries have appropriate opportunity to understand this situation and act accordingly by strengthening services with complete emphasis on users.

#### **Support and Recognition from the Management**

Ultimate aim of library is to extend whole hearted support and services to readers. So that there will be concrete bond of love and attachment between library staff and readers. Both will find themselves convenient and comfortable to share their views, expectations without any barriers. This will realise only when management authority gives recognition, appreciation and support to library staff for

doing right things. Management's role is also equally important in this matter.

### Response from Readers

Readers also have equal responsibility. They should look towards library like 'the guru' and real place of learning. Hence they should cooperate to maintain discipline, strict observation of laws, rules and regulations. This brings conducive environment in the library. Readers particularly students should give up lust, angry, greed and over joy and should concentrate only on improvement of knowledge to achieve the final goal of their life and to be a good, responsible citizen to serve next generation.

### Consistency in Services

On some occasions like exam period and other activities library functioning get interrupted because of use library reading room for exam or to organise programmes, sometimes borrowing library chairs, transfer of temporary of library staff for some purpose...etc. This all badly hampers on smooth functioning of library. Therefore such practices should be avoided.

### Conclusion

The brief study of holistic approach: Soul of sustainable library services shows that in present situation holistic approach toward readers is an ideal and appropriate means of improving library services. It helps to mould and refine personality of reader considering all needed aspect to be a complete and perfect man. Learning resource centre' emphasis is given on learning than the caring of store house

of knowledge. To bring this new change library staff need to develop holistic approach. Holistic approach aims at helping students to be most that they can be. Promote user to describe the concept what they have learned. Regularity in duties, discipline, devotion, interest in learning, attachment and commitment towards readers... etc are needed for library staff. Support from management and response of readers to library staff are equally important to make the holistic approach more success.

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