

## Discussion on Library Knowledge Assistance Services for Knowledge Vulnerable People Groups

Haiming Guo

Weifang University Library, Weifang, Shandong Province, 261061

haiminguo@163.com

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**Abstract:** In order to build a harmonious socialist society, we must solve the problem of the relationship between the strong people groups and the weak people groups in society. Knowledge vulnerable people groups refer to the social vulnerable people groups which have serious obstacles in knowledge acquisition and utilization. Based on the analysis of the meaning and causes of knowledge vulnerable people groups, this paper makes a thorough thinking on why and how to carry out knowledge assistance in libraries.

### 1. Introduction

In order to build a harmonious socialist society, we must solve the problem of the relationship between the strong people and the weak people groups in society. Reforming and opening up has brought about rapid development of national economy and continuous improvement of people's living standards. However, at the same time, the growing polarization between the rich and the poor has caused a new social problem--the problem of vulnerable people groups in society. Social vulnerable people groups not only show serious difficulties in economic life, but also show extreme poverty in knowledge and cultural life. We call this social vulnerable group which is extremely poor in knowledge culture as the knowledge vulnerable group. Libraries are important institutions for the preservation, transmission and diffusion of social knowledge and information. The task of libraries is to achieve the exchange of ideas, knowledge and information by collecting, collating and preserving human literature and information, so as to improve the cultural and educational level of social members, enhance the scientific and technological strength and innovation ability of social members, and promote the development of social economy and social progress.[1] Faced with the increasingly prominent social vulnerable people groups in our country, especially those who are extremely poor in knowledge and cultural life, libraries, as palaces of cultural knowledge and information distribution centers, have the responsibility and obligation to play an active role in helping the vulnerable people groups in the acquisition of knowledge, help the social vulnerable people groups casting off poverty and to setting out on a road to prosperity from the perspective of information and knowledge.

### 2. Formation of Knowledge vulnerable people groups

#### 2.1 The Meaning of Knowledge vulnerable people groups

There are the strong people groups and the weak people groups in any society and any era. Social vulnerable people groups are a group of people who are in a weak position in politics, economy, culture, physiology and so on. [2] The composition of social vulnerable people groups is complex, but basically can be divided into two categories, namely, "physiological vulnerable people groups" and "social vulnerable people groups". At present, the vulnerable people groups in China include laid-off workers in cities, poor retirees in cities, other poor people in cities, farmers in poverty-stricken areas, migrant workers in cities and the disabled, elderly and children with physical defects. Knowledge vulnerable group refers to the social vulnerable group which has serious obstacles in knowledge acquisition and utilization. It is an integral part of the social

vulnerable group, which is not only at a political, economic and physiological disadvantage, but also at a very disadvantageous level in information and knowledge acquisition. This group has the following characteristics: a large number of people, living in distress; a very low economic income; a decline in political status; a tendency to irrational psychology and behavior; a strong integration easily evolved into collective behavior, which is a huge hidden danger to social stability. Therefore, it is a great contribution to the stability of the country and a requirement for building a harmonious socialist society to provide assistance to the vulnerable people groups. Libraries should play a central role in knowledge assistance for the vulnerable people groups in society. [3]

## **2.2 Reasons for the Origin of Knowledge Vulnerable People Groups**

### **2.2.1 Social Reasons**

This is mainly manifested in the vulnerable people groups of social knowledge. Society is the melting pot of knowledge vulnerable people groups, and social factors are also the most fundamental reasons for the formation of knowledge vulnerable people groups, such as the asymmetry of resources, inadequate facilities and so on. It should be said that there have been knowledge disadvantaged groups in the history of human society, but different social forms have different characteristics. The current laid-off and unemployed people in our country are caused by social reasons.

### **2.2.2 Economic Reasons**

Low economic income is the direct cause of knowledge disadvantaged groups. Due to economic reasons, many people in remote mountainous areas and low-income society can not get the education they deserve, and it is even more difficult to obtain the required knowledge and information resources.

### **2.2.3 Reasons for Physiological Disorders**

This is mainly reflected in the disabled and the elderly. They have visual, auditory or other physical barriers, so they can't access knowledge and information as normal people do. Because of the inconvenience of action, some new media in the information age do not understand or contradict, and the lack of cultural and knowledge resources such as libraries and newspaper kiosks nearby, so they are unable to obtain the required information and become the knowledge vulnerable people groups.

### **2.2.4 Reasons for Low Comprehensive Quality**

These are mainly laid-off workers, unemployed workers and migrant workers in cities, and most of them are women. Because most of them are older, less educated and have low educational level, their comprehensive quality, especially information quality, is relatively low, which affects their acquisition of knowledge and information and makes them a vulnerable group of knowledge.

### **2.2.5 Psychological, Values and Social Interaction Factors**

The poor comprehensive quality leads to the poor employment competitiveness and basic survival ability of the vulnerable people groups, and in some cases will be discriminated against by the strong groups. This has resulted in their serious sense of loss and inferiority. Some of them have formed the values of self-abandonment, Non-Progress and fatalism. All these have seriously hindered the acquisition and utilization of knowledge and information, pushing them from the edge of the knowledge vulnerable people groups to the knowledge vulnerable people groups. [4]

## **3. Library Knowledge Assistance Services Measures**

Knowledge assistance refers to a public welfare activity in which the government and social forces provide knowledge products or services to vulnerable people groups free of charge or at a lower cost. It is an important part of China's social welfare and social security system. It is different from social relief, not in the form of redistribution of national income, to provide economic

assistance to the poor in order to ensure their minimum living standards; but through supportive services, to enhance the competitiveness of vulnerable people groups, increase their opportunities for social participation, thereby changing their vulnerable situation. It is not only a kind of government behavior, with public welfare and guidance, its main body of implementation is all levels of government and public utilities; it can also be a kind of social behavior, with a certain degree of voluntary and selectivity, its main body of implementation is social groups or individuals. [5] As one of the public utilities, libraries are the distribution center of information and knowledge, the medium of inheritance of human society and culture. They have the advantages of resources, talents, finance and geography in knowledge assistance. They should play a leading role in how to provide knowledge assistance to the disadvantaged.

### **3.1 The Significance and Function of Library Knowledge Assistance**

#### **3.1.1 Library knowledge assistance is an effective way for libraries to support the work of poverty alleviation of the Party and the government and to build socialist harmony**

Efforts to reduce the expansion and spread of vulnerable people groups in society are related to the stability of the whole society and the success or failure of reform. It is the basic requirement of building a harmonious socialist society and has become the focus of widespread concern of the Chinese government and society. Premier Zhu stressed in his government report that actively expanding employment and reemployment is an important way to increase residents' income, and special employment assistance should be given to vulnerable people groups. In addition to economic and policy support, the special employment assistance here is more important on the one hand. Only by assisting them with knowledge and skills can we really solve the problem of poverty. Most of the existing social security measures emphasize economic support and material assistance to vulnerable people groups, and pay little attention to their psychological state and knowledge and cultural needs. The library's knowledge aid is to solve their spiritual and cultural poverty, tap and improve their knowledge and skills, remove the obstacles on their way to wealth, so that they can get more opportunities for development. [6]

#### **3.1.2 Library knowledge assistance is the social responsibility and obligation of libraries, and it is an important part of their daily work**

Library is the inheritance institution of human society and culture. Helping people to improve their knowledge and get rid of poverty is an important part of their work and their social responsibility. Throughout the development history of Libraries in the world and China, from Confucius' advocacy of "teaching without classes" thousands of years ago to the service concept of "providing services to anybody at any time, anywhere" advocated by libraries today, it fully reflects the social responsibility of serving the public fairly. In the 2001 Guidelines for the Development of Public Library Services, IFLA and UNESCO pointed out that all the public have the right to enjoy library services, regardless of race, nationality, age, sex, religious beliefs, language, ability, economic and employment status or educational level.

#### **3.1.3 Library knowledge assistance is conducive to eliminating the asymmetry of information and knowledge resources, realizing social knowledge equity and building a fair and harmonious new society**

Modern social equity is increasingly used as an important criterion for evaluating social development and as the preferred value of advanced social systems. Knowledge equity has also become an important part of social equity. The asymmetry of knowledge resources is the most important reason for the enlargement of the "knowledge gap" in modern society. Library knowledge assistance is just an effective way to solve the problem of "knowledge gap". [7]

#### **3.1.4 Library knowledge assistance is helpful to realize the all-round development of human beings**

Through library knowledge assistance, on the one hand, vulnerable people groups can solve their

problems by improving their survival skills, on the other hand, vulnerable people groups can have the ability and channels to participate in social activities and safeguard their rights according to law, so as to achieve the promotion of group rights and the overall development of individuals.

### **3.1.5 Library knowledge assistance is the need of library's own development**

In the process of providing knowledge assistance to vulnerable people groups, libraries have constantly enlarged the use value of libraries, attracted more people to enter libraries and maximized the social benefits of libraries, which has attracted widespread attention from the government and society, obtained more funds and social support, and accelerated their own development.

## **3.2 Library Knowledge Assistance Measures**

To stop the further expansion of knowledge vulnerable people groups and eliminate their social roots, apart from the government's formulation of relevant policies as soon as possible and the establishment of a sound social knowledge security system, other social institutions and every social member must constantly update and adjust their values to adapt to the development trend of society: gradually replacing the current principle of paying equal attention to efficiency and fairness. The principle of "giving priority to efficiency and giving consideration to fairness" is put forward. Because only by attaching importance to and resolving fairness issues, can society achieve stability, harmony and sustainable development. Specifically to the problem of knowledge vulnerable people groups, in view of the current level of economic development in China, the solution of the problem can not be achieved overnight, but a long and gradual process.

### **3.2.1 Legal Protection**

The State Council and the people's governments at all levels should further standardize the contents of knowledge assistance responsibilities in library laws and regulations, and promote the culture of vulnerable people groups to get rid of poverty and become rich. In recent years, library laws and regulations have been promulgated in various places, such as Beijing Library Regulations, Shanghai Library Regulations, Shenzhen Library Regulations, etc. National Library Law is also in the process of active formulation. However, from the point of view of existing laws and regulations, the content of library knowledge assistance is not enough, mostly just a vague sentence or two, lacking of substantive operational content. In the future, the Library Law and the Library Regulations should specify the responsibilities and obligations of library knowledge assistance more clearly, and clearly express the scope, content and methods of library knowledge assistance.

### **3.2.2 System Guarantee**

The government should plan as a whole and establish a national knowledge aid and guarantee system based on the existing network of public libraries. By 2003, there were 2709 public libraries in China, with 49646 staff members, covering all provinces, municipalities, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government. [8] This provides a good foundation for the knowledge aid and guarantee system. The state should strengthen the construction and management of community libraries and village-level libraries, especially those in rural areas where the population is large and the geographical location is relatively remote, and extend the knowledge assistance system of public library network to every administrative village and community in the country, so that all citizens, whether poor or rich, have access to knowledge.

### **3.2.3 Technical Support**

Make full use of the advantages of today's computer networks, speed up the construction of public digital libraries, and provide human public knowledge to the citizens of the whole society free of charge through the network, so that people can get the knowledge they want without going out. Where the network arrives, there will be our "library" and our knowledge service.

### **3.2.4 Adhere to the Principle of Public Welfare of Library Services**

The public welfare of library services is the duty of libraries to all members of society, a basic function of the government, and a symbol of social equality. vulnerable people groups are equal members of society. They have practical difficulties in social life. The government and the whole society have the obligation to give care and assistance. As public goods, library's public welfare service is essentially a medium of sympathy, goodwill and concern for the vulnerable people groups, and a reflection of social equity. Only by adhering to the principle of public welfare of library services can we effectively provide knowledge assistance to vulnerable people groups.

### **3.2.5 Platform Support**

Actively participate in the national "knowledge engineering", "sending books to the countryside project", "national cultural information resources sharing project", and build a knowledge sharing platform for the whole society to ensure equal opportunities for citizens to acquire knowledge.

### **3.2.6 Social Security**

Joint efforts should be made to improve the actual efficiency of library knowledge assistance by associating various social groups and individuals. Library is the knowledge resource and education center of human society. It has unique advantages in resources and equipment. It is the backbone of knowledge assistance and occupies a dominant position in the knowledge aid system. Libraries should cooperate with all sectors of society to carry out knowledge and technical assistance, and pay more attention to the actual efficiency of assistance.

### **3.2.7 Facilities Protection**

Strengthen the construction of knowledge resources and corresponding facilities suitable for vulnerable people groups. The disadvantaged people are eager to get rid of their poverty and crisis. They attach great importance to practicality in their knowledge needs. In addition, the physiological disadvantaged groups have special requirements for resources. We should build and supplement library knowledge resources and corresponding equipment according to the characteristics of this group. [9] The library should strengthen the accessibility service to the disadvantaged groups of physiological knowledge. The construction of information accessibility environment should include two aspects: one is the accessibility of material environment, which mainly refers to ramps, blind roads, handrails, special toilets for the disabled, special elevators and convenient buttons, and the installation of audio signal devices. Second, the accessibility of information and communication, which mainly refers to Braille books, Braille computers, film and television subtitles, ceiling books, reading services, sign language, network services, door-to-door delivery of books and so on. [10]

### **3.2.8 Education Guarantee**

Conduct training courses and special lectures to help vulnerable people groups understand the distribution of Library resources, master the use of equipment, familiarize themselves with literature retrieval strategies, and improve their ability to acquire information and knowledge. At the same time, libraries should actively carry out free consulting services and directional services to solve the practical problems of vulnerable people groups.

## **4. Conclusion**

In the era of rapid development of knowledge economy, the gap between knowledge-enriched and knowledge-poor is gradually widening, and the phenomenon of knowledge gap will become increasingly fierce. How to carry out knowledge aid effectively in a long time is an important social system arrangement in the knowledge age. This social security system is not only a one-time activity, but also ensures the long-term operation of knowledge aid and achieves the expected results as far as possible, helping the knowledge-poor to seek their economic interests, improve their spiritual living standards, and strive for democratic rights, so as to realize knowledge fairness and even society. Fair. Therefore, the establishment of library knowledge assistance platform and

the construction of relevant systems will inevitably enable the library to form a core competitiveness superior to other information institutions in providing users with characteristic knowledge services, and better play the role of Library in ensuring knowledge equity and social equity.

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