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Short Communication

A study on the development and assessment of evaluation indicators for library's social value

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DESCRIPTION

Research objective and purpose

Libraries have been found to have a great impact on the national and local communities, despite the increasing concerns among filed librarians due to undervalued special libraries, including the university library. In addition, as a result of analyzing previous studies, it was found that many studies evaluated economic value and educational value in great depth although no studies made a multilateral approach. In this study, an attempt was made to develop evaluation indicators to evaluate the social value of the library and measure the social value of the library by surveying the librarians and users of public libraries based on the indicators (Becker et al., 2010, Bertot et al., 2006).

Research content and method

In this study, preliminary evaluation indicators were derived by collectively collecting and analyzing domestic and overseas studies that primarily studied the value of the library in order to measure the social values of libraries. Eleven experts were selected to conduct three separate Delphi surveys in order to develop final evaluation indicators derived from the survey based on which the social value of librarians and users of 100 public libraries was measured (Soon-Yang 2006, Noh 2006).

Table 1. Final evaluation indicator of social value of library

Evaluation	Evaluation Item	# of Evaluation Indicators
Community Development (16)	Library provides a variety of spaces for community activities.	5
	Library helps to connect people and ideas.	3
	The evaluation of the social role of the library is increasing.	8
Community Linkage (11)	Library contributes to the creation and strengthening of local communities.	4
	Library contributes to strengthening the connection of local residents.	6
	Library contributes to the improvement of interpersonal relations.	1

DISCUSSION

Development of evaluation indicators for the library's social values

In this research, the list presented by the ALA and the domestic research results have been analyzed and the core contents were structured to derive the preliminary evaluation indicators to measure the social values of the library. The preliminary evaluation indicator was composed of 5 evaluation areas, 14 evaluation items, and 88 evaluation indicators. Based on this and through three Delphi surveys, the final evaluation indicators composed of 4 evaluation areas, 13 evaluation items, and 64 evaluation indicators were developed. Specifically, 3 evaluation items and 16 evaluation indicators were derived from the community development evaluation area, 3 evaluation items and 11 evaluation indicators were derived from the community linkage evaluation area, and 2 evaluation items and 16 evaluation indicators were derived from the evaluation area of improving the quality of life of local residents (Jin-Sung 2011, Lee 2014).

In addition, 2 evaluation items and 12 evaluation indicators were derived from the equalization area of local residents, and 3 evaluation items and 9 evaluation indicators were derived from the evaluation area of information service required for the community (Table 1) (McDavid et al., 2006).

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Improving the quality of life of local residents (16)	Library contributes to improving the quality of life of users.	9
	Library contributes to strengthening recreation.	7
Equalization of local residents (12)	Library contributes to the social adaptability of the vulnerable.	7
	Library contributes to the equalization of local residents through the provision of library services.	5
Providing information services for the community (9)	Library is a provider of government information.	2
	Library provides information to the local community.	6
	Library provides corporate and employment information.	1
Total		64

Results of evaluating the social values of the library

This study separately examined the librarian and the user groups in order to investigate the perception toward the social value of the library. Questionnaires were conducted as offline surveys, distributed to 100 public libraries, 2 librarians and 5 users each, for a total of 200 librarians and 500 users. In the case of librarians, the retrieval rate was 78% with 156 copies out of 200 copies distributed were retrieved whereas 236 copies or 47.2% of the 500 copies distributed to the users were retrieved (23.6%) (Immroth et al., 1995).

Demographic characteristics: A total of 392 subjects were analyzed for their demographic characteristics, with 111 males (28.32%) and 281 females (71.68%). 156 (39.80%) were librarians and 236 (60.20%) were users. The age distribution of respondents showed 120 people in their 30s (30.61%), 118 people of age 29 or less (30.10%), and 90 people in their 40s (22.96%). The number of visits to the library by the respondents

varied as 196 people visiting the library for 4 times or more per week (50.00%), 99 people for once a week (25.26%), and 66 people for twice per week (16.84%),

Results of analysis by social value evaluation area:

The evaluation of social value is largely classified into five categories: community development, community linkage, improvement of the quality of life of local residents, equalization of local residents, and provision of information necessary for the community. As a result of analysis by evaluation area, the area of improvement of quality of life of local residents was the highest at 4.06, followed by community development at 4.05, and equalization of local residents at 3.89. In addition, respondents showed the highest level of consensus on recognizing improving the quality of life of local residents as one of the social values of public libraries and perceived the value of evaluating the social role of libraries as increasing (Table 2) (Bawden et al., 2009, Carman et al., 2008).

Table 2. Analytical results by evaluation area

Evaluation Area	Evaluation Item	M	Std
Community Development	Library provides a variety of spaces for community activities.	4.06	0.836
	Library helps to connect people and ideas.	3.83	0.91
	The evaluation of the social role of the library is increasing.	4.28	0.728
	Total	4.05	0.825
Community Linkage	Library contributes to the creation and strengthening of local communities.	3.79	0.881
	Library contributes to strengthening the connection of local residents.	3.84	0.896
	Library contributes to the improvement of interpersonal relations.	3.81	0.917
	Total	3.81	0.898
Improving the quality of life of local residents	Library contributes to improving the quality of life of users.	4.18	0.758
	Library contributes to strengthening recreation.	3.95	0.858
	Total	4.06	0.808
Equalization of local residents	Library contributes to the social adaptability of the vulnerable.	3.64	0.961
	Library contributes to the equalization of local residents through the provision of library services.	4.14	0.815
	Total	3.89	0.888
Providing information services for the community	Library is a provider of government information.	3.58	0.965
	Library provides information to the local community.	3.75	0.915
	Library provides corporate and employment information.	3.45	1.04
	Total	3.59	0.973

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Dens In this research, the list presented by the ALA and the domestic research results have been analyzed and the core contents were to derive the preliminary social value evaluation indicators and conduct 3 separate Delphi surveys. 11 experts were selected for the surveys, and revisions, additions and deletions were made by collecting opinions of experts in each survey to develop a final evaluation indicator consisting of 5 evaluation areas, 13 evaluation items, and 64 evaluation indicators. As a result of extracting the top 20 indicators out of the analyzed 64 indicators, the question item asking whether a public library is a very important asset in the community showed the highest average value of 4.53. Similarly, local residents prefer having a library near their houses as they can readily use the library when needed scored 4.52, whether most people think it's important to have a library in every area scored 4.39, and whether libraries provide access to information regardless of race, income, class, age, and gender scored 4.32. Libraries have been

As a result of extracting the 20 lowest indicators out of the analyzed 64 indicators, library provides information needed to small and medium industry entities and research institute showed an average of 3.36, showing the lowest level of recognition in terms of the social value of the library. Similarly, local residents use the Internet to create local communities by participating in email, chat, discussion, and more scored 3.37, and library supports human resource development activities so that immigrants can learn job search skills, basic computer usage, skills needed at work, and how to use tools at work scored 3.40, indicating a low level of recognition in the aspect of library's creation and reinforcement of local communities and support for social adaptation of the vulnerable.

Suggestions

There is limited research on the social impact or value of the library — except when partially mentioned occasionally referring to the overall value of the library. Therefore, research that focuses on the social value of the library must be conducted.

The evaluation indicator developed in this research is expected to be a basic tool that can be applied to public libraries as well as other types of libraries. In addition, the evaluation indicator developed in this research can be applied to nonprofit organizations similar to libraries and this research is expected to have a social impact as a study that evaluates and presents the social values of libraries.

On the other hand, since the research was conducted in a personal context, the questionnaire survey was administered in 100 libraries with limitations among the public libraries nationwide. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the social value of libraries of other kinds such as university libraries, school libraries, and specialized libraries. Consequently, it is

deemed imperative to conduct a study that measures social value for each type of libraries based on the indicator developed in this study.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None declared

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