

## **Library Services in the Context of Modern Requirements of Information Society**

### **Lidiya Kurmysheva**

Junior Research Fellow at the Laboratory of Information and System Analysis, State Public Scientific Technological Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia.

[kurmysheva@spsl.nsc.ru](mailto:kurmysheva@spsl.nsc.ru)

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8452-2361>

### **Evgeniya Pshenichnaya**

Ph.D. Student, Junior Research Fellow at the Book Studies Laboratory, State Public Scientific Technological Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia.

Corresponding Author: [pshenichnaya@spsl.nsc.ru](mailto:pshenichnaya@spsl.nsc.ru)

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1334-0376>

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### **Abstract**

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate library services in the context of the requirements of a modern information society. The main reason for studying the modern range of library services is associated with the increasing importance of information space in the life of every person. In this context, traditional information sources are becoming less popular among the population. People prefer using the Internet for research as opposed to research in the library. As a result, false news spreads more rapidly on social networks, including in the scientific information space. Many research papers have been dedicated to new tools and methods of information presentation. However, the issue of library services content remains very important, and it demands researchers' attention. To study library services content, the authors used the quantitative content analysis method as the main research method. The authors analyzed the websites of five Russian and seven foreign libraries. It was discovered that libraries retained their traditional services along with new popular services such as scientometric and bibliometric services, different remoted services and education programs, etc. The library also plays a significant role in the processing, evaluation, and generalization of information to provide reliable information for its users. The authors concluded that, even though in the modern information space, there are a large number of sources of information, the library is a source of reliable information in information exchange.

**Keywords:** Library Services, Information Society, Library Users, False Information, Reliable Information.

### **Introduction**

The possession of knowledge characterizes the development of a knowledge society as the prevailing value. The dominant role of knowledge as a driving force of development, in this case, is an indicator of a post-industrial society. It is undoubtedly that such realities dictate the mandatory nature of the development of a system for the dissemination of scientific knowledge in all spheres of society. The library, as the most accessible cultural institution, can ensure the dissemination of knowledge in all sectors of society.

The main reason for studying the modern range of library services is associated with the increasing importance of information space in the life of every person. In this context,

traditional information sources are becoming less popular among the population. The rapid development of information and communication technology launched a period of intensive computerization in libraries that had a phenomenal impact on library services. New technologies such as augmented reality, wearable computing, and 3D printing became a part of the library, forcing continuous development and offering new services to adapt to evolving customer habits (Qin, 2018).

Traditional sources of information in this context have become less popular among the population. Accordingly, libraries, as an essential source of information, are forced to adapt to modern realities and try to find their place in the new information space. The combination of resources available to modern libraries makes it possible to hold both local and large-scale popular science events in online and offline spaces. The involvement of specialists and interaction with the local community will make this process the most effective. The researchers from India, Nageswari and Natarajan (2020), believed that "they (libraries) have the responsibility to bring knowledge to the doors of those who need it so that this knowledge can be used fruitfully... People from all walks of life use library resources in their daily lives".

One of the possible channels for obtaining relevant scientific information, including virtual space, can be a library. Dvorkina (2009b) pointed out that the virtual library environment, as well as the real one, is fully capable of meeting the requirements of readers and realizing socio-cultural, educational, cultural-informational, and cultural-educational tasks. The main source of information, in this case, becomes the library's website. Kruleva (2009) noted that the library website is an integrated resource; it combines information, search, educational, advertising, and navigation functions. In that way, the study of the dissemination of scientific knowledge in society, including through libraries, is today an urgent topic and an essential aspect of the development of education. Libraries play a crucial role in providing access to scientific research, educational materials, and literary sources, contributing to the dissemination of knowledge among a broad audience; they hold lectures, exhibitions, and other events aimed at developing reading, educational, and cultural skills. The purpose of this work is to analyze the activities of libraries.

### Literature Review

Analysis of the literature showed that this subject became interesting for scientists from different countries in the early 20th century. It was studied by such scientists as Qin (2018), Matonkar (2019), Kumbhar and Bidve (2016), Goncharov (2002) and Udartseva (2021). In the early 2000s, the problem of providing catalogs, databases, and other library resources in the Internet space became the most relevant issue, and it was studied by some researchers (Qin, 2018; Matonkar, 2019; Kumbhar & Bidve, 2016) over the past 20 years. In particular, in 2002, Russian researcher Goncharov studied the creation of library Internet complexes. The significance of this scientific work related to a model proposed by him for the development of the concept and principles of designing automated (2002) library and information systems that took into account the peculiarities of Internet technologies, as well as the development of methodology for the use of Internet technologies in library practice. The model developed by Goncharov (2002) was implemented in 112 libraries in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan by 2022.

Nowadays, the Internet space has become a platform for interaction in various fields of science and life. Informatization in all spheres of life leads to a gradual transition from personal

communication to communication mediated by the Internet. In this regard, studies of the information and library web environment, content, and library sites are becoming relevant (Aharony, 2012; Chow, 2014; Black, 2009). One of these researches was developed by Russian researcher Udartseva in 2021, and it is devoted to web analytics tools in library website management. She developed a model of library website management, where the data of web analytics tools were the basis for decision-making (Udartseva, 2021). Nevertheless, speaking about the development and dissemination of the library environment on the Internet and the formation of web analytics, we should not leave the traditional issue of library services content out of research scope. Despite the new tools and methods of presenting information, the content of library services remains very important.

Another important aspect of the library's existence in the information environment is working with false information or fake news. The context of the modern information space imposes its requirements for the broadcast of any message. Erroneous or false information contained in the broadcast message may be duplicated in various sources. Attention should be paid to the source of information and its sender. In this regard, it is necessary to take a more responsible approach to choosing the source of information. Buschman (2019) pointed out that: "Libraries help to counter fake news through specific educational actions aimed at them. Portugal researchers Revez and Corujo (2021) conducted a systematic review of the literature on library practice from January 2018 to September 2020. The central message of this study was the idea that librarians can resist fake news. The main method to combat false information should be "information literacy as a comprehensive strategy developed within the framework of library education in recent decades".

The object of this study is to investigate a wide range of services provided by the largest Russian and foreign libraries to their users.

### **The Relevance**

Modern trends in developing information society make it possible to increase scientific awareness and dissemination of scientific information among a large number of populations. According to the results of a study published by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM)<sup>1</sup> in 2021, more than half of Russians (60%) are interested in the achievements of science and technology. The study of the interaction of science and society has been relevant for many decades. This is due to many factors. First of all, the technical benefits surrounding us are connected with scientific achievements. As B. Latour notes, we are both actors and objects of influence of scientific and technological practices. Science, which used to be rather a theoretical matter for scientists, is now becoming a practical matter for all of us (Erkina, 2019).

In this regard, research libraries as centers of concentration of science and popular science information can contribute to the dissemination of such information (The Science, 2021). The context of the modern information society dictates several requirements for forming a library environment. In this study, we used the definition of library environment proposed by Dvorkina (2009a). She defines the library environment as a resource, intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and emotional personal environment consumed by librarians and users. The library environment positively or negatively affects a person's activities in and outside the library, and it is a component of the information and cultural environment of society (ibid). Library and information services play an important role in forming the library environment.

Stefanovskaya and Khapochkina (2011) highlighted that according to the respondents, the attitude of users toward libraries depends primarily on the quality of services (43.3%), on the attitude of library staff towards users (3.3%), on the quality of service (6.7%), on library working hours (3.3%), on culture and behavior (3.3%). Thus, the quality of services has a decisive impact on the user's relationship with the library. With access to advances in digital technology and as more and more information becomes available through a wide range of media, the traditional concept of the library is being redefined. Libraries now include resources and services using cutting-edge technology, including digital collections, social media, and in-demand resources. The main function of the library is to be an active global media and communication center.

According to a study conducted by a group of independent researchers funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2013, Americans believe that public libraries should offer the following services:

- close coordination with local schools - 85% of Americans aged 16 years and older;
- free literacy programs for young children - 82% of Americans aged 16 years and older;
- comfortable places for reading, work, and recreation - 59% of Americans aged 16 years and older;
- a more comprehensive selection of e-books - 53% of Americans aged 16 and older.

According to the study, these services are considered the most demanding.

In addition, 91% of Americans say that libraries are essential to their families and communities, but they often do not know about all the services that libraries offer (Pew Research Center, 2013).

Another study conducted in the USA in 2016 found that 80% of users believe that libraries should offer services to teach children and seniors how to use computers, smartphones, and apps (Figure 1). During the study, 1,601 respondents aged 16 and older were interviewed (Statista Research Department, 2016).

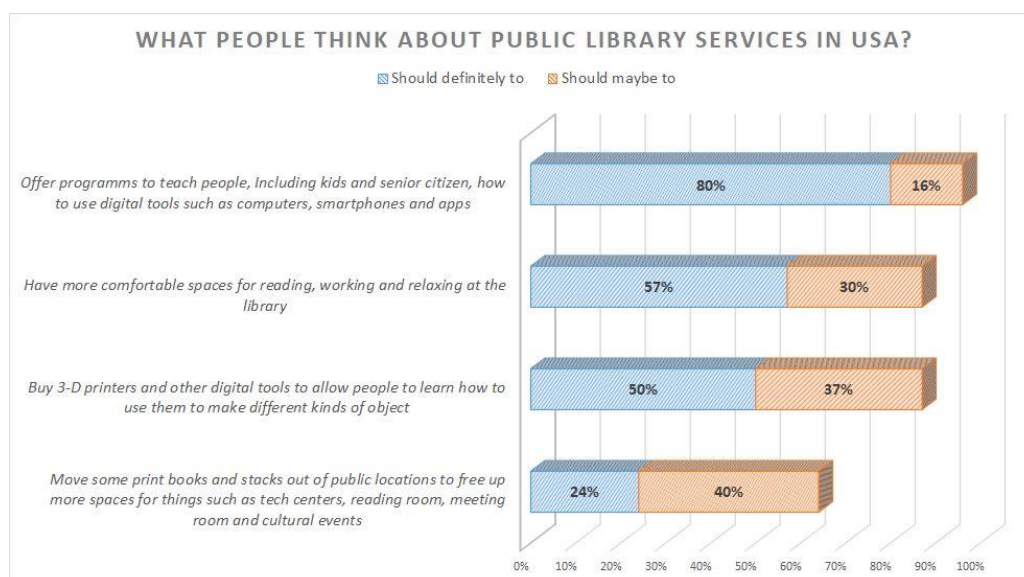


Figure 1: What do people think about public library services in the USA?

From the research results presented above, it follows that public libraries are essential not only as leisure but also as educational centers within local communities. In this regard, it is

crucial to provide a range of library services that must meet the user requirements. In this way, the subject of this study is the range of services provided by the largest Russian and foreign libraries to their users.

### Materials and Methods

The quantitative content analysis method was chosen as the main research method. This method was used to analyze the websites of the largest Russian and foreign libraries. We were able to study libraries that were not available to us due to the geographical distance. We paid particular attention to analyzing such website sections that contain information about the services provided in libraries. This method is considered a perfect tool to experiment with the content and examine it using methods other than the usual reading of a book or watching a television program. In this study, we measured the frequency of selected words for analysis. For example, how often did one or another word or phrase we selected occur in the Services Section? This may be, for example, "information service", "digitization of publications", etc. Thus, we use manifest coding, i.e., a simple calculation of the number of words selected for analysis.

As a sample of content analysis, we focused on the five largest Russian libraries and the seven largest libraries in the world. We did not compare the services they provided but analyzed their availability. Table 1 shows an example of analysis:

Table 1

*An Example of an Analysis*

Library website	Services Section	Word/ Collocation	+/-
Russian State Library	+	- electronic resources; - reference services; - restoration services; - bibliometric analysis; - .....	+ + + - -

### Results

Table 2 shows a list of the main free and fee-based services provided by the Russian State Library, the Russian National Library, the State Public Scientific and Technical Library of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the State Public Scientific and Technical Library of Russia and the State Public Historical Library.

Table 2

*Library and Information services provided by the largest libraries in Russia*

№	Library	Services
1.	Russian State Library (RSL)	– providing users with documents in the reading rooms and other divisions of the RSL from the funds of the RSL; – reference and information services; – providing access to exhibitions revealing the collection of the RSL; – demonstration of electronic resources; – providing users with the possibility of pre-ordering documents; – extension of the term for booking documents in the reading room by phone;

№	Library	Services
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– providing the possibility of ordering documents that are not in the RSL by desideratum;</li> <li>– individual admission of dissertations to the RSL collection (in traditional and electronic form);</li> <li>– providing users with the following services: playing music on the piano, listening to music through the broadcast network and headphones, and listening to electronic documents (sound and multimedia) from the RSL’s collections.</li> </ul>
2.	National Library of Russian (NLR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ordering publications from the NLR’s collection and its partner libraries to reading rooms;</li> <li>– providing access to the electronic catalog;</li> <li>– providing access to the card catalogs;</li> <li>– providing access to subscription resources of remote access</li> <li>– bibliographic and information references;</li> <li>– free access to legislative information on the basis of modern information technologies at the Legislative Information Center;</li> <li>– information service on the basis of the Center "The Return of the Name" (more information at <a href="http://visz.nlr.ru">http://visz.nlr.ru</a>);</li> <li>– a range of services for genealogy and family history research</li> </ul>
3.	State Public Scientific and Technological Library of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (SPSTL SB RAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– "Night subscription" - the opportunity to borrow the reading room information resources outside the library working hours;</li> <li>– book lending and renewal of book subscriptions;</li> <li>– excursion service;</li> <li>– ordering publications from the main book storage;</li> <li>– methodological assistance within electronic order;</li> <li>– interlibrary loan and document delivery;</li> <li>– bibliographic information on topics of interest using electronic catalogs and databases;</li> <li>– the search for patent and normative and technical documents in foreign and national databases;</li> <li>– bibliometric services.</li> </ul>
4.	State Public Library for Science and Technology (SPLST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– free access to the Internet;</li> <li>– provision of information about the composition of the library collection through the catalog system and other forms of library information, including remote access through the SPLST’s website;</li> <li>– provision of documents for temporary use with the possibility of booking publications for a certain period;</li> <li>– reference and information services;</li> <li>– interlibrary loan;</li> <li>– scientometrics and bibliometric services.;</li> <li>– remoted library services</li> </ul>
5.	State Public Historical Library (SPHL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– free access to card and electronic catalogs;</li> <li>– reference and information services;</li> <li>– electronic book order;</li> <li>– free access to network remote (subscription) resources;</li> <li>– excursions;</li> <li>– sales of the SPHL’s publishing products</li> </ul>

Table 3 shows the main services provided by the largest foreign libraries in the world.

Table 3

*Library and Information services provided by the largest foreign libraries*

№	Library	Services
1.	Library of Congress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– «Ask a Librarian»: expert assistance in research or using the library from librarians and research subject specialists.</li> <li>– Cataloging services include search vocabulary, classification, policy, products, training, and cooperative programs.</li> <li>– services and support to authors and users of creative works;</li> <li>– products and services to researchers using the library’s extensive English and foreign-language collections on a cost-recovery basis;</li> <li>– Comprehensive research reference service to Congress and the public on foreign, comparative, international, and U.S. law.</li> <li>– interlibrary loan;</li> <li>– consulting services related to key technical standards used in the library community;</li> <li>– resources for publishers, editors, and the public interested in Library publications and co-publishing opportunities;</li> <li>– research, science, and collaboration in preserving the library’s collections;</li> <li>– service for the Blind and Print Disabled.</li> </ul>
2.	British Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– information about the library collection and the procedure for accessing it;</li> <li>– information on exhibitions and events taking place in the library;</li> <li>– a wide range of educational services for teachers and students of all ages;</li> <li>– support for research initiatives in different subject areas;</li> <li>– publishing services;</li> <li>– book and manuscript restoration</li> </ul>
3.	National library of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– three types of membership: Reading Room Member, Lending Member, Daily Card Member</li> <li>– interlibrary loan;</li> <li>– bibliographic services for research scholars, Government agencies, universities, and national-level institutions;</li> <li>– Reprographic services: use reprographic facilities against payment. The photocopies, microfilms, and microfilms printout/photocopy are provided within the limits of the International Copyrights Act;</li> <li>– Services for Children: the division provides children with reading material for information and fun.</li> </ul>
4.	National Library of Germany (Frankfurt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– digitization service on demand;</li> <li>– interlibrary lending;</li> <li>– reference management;</li> <li>– DNBLab: Access to data sets and digital objects;</li> <li>– provision of all bibliographic data from the German National Library and the authority data from the Integrated Authority File free of charge;</li> <li>– title registration;</li> <li>– individual bibliography</li> </ul>
5.	National library of Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a range of tools to assist any research;</li> <li>– School and teacher programs: exhibitions, collections, and reading rooms, as well as springboards to find out more about Australian history and culture. Students critically interpret texts and learn search methods to understand historical</li> </ul>

№	Library	Services
		and contemporary events and issues; – teacher professional development program; – services for publishers: ISBN, ISSN, ISMN, Legal deposit, etc); – information on copyright; – digital reproduction of a library item and Interlibrary Loan for individuals.
6.	National Library of Belorussia	– information and bibliographical service; – document indexing: UDC, BBK, GRNTI, author number; – plagiarism detection; – measuring the productivity of the publications of an author/organization; – examination of books and manuscripts; – media monitoring; – booking and lending; – library service for blind and visually impaired users; – interlibrary Loan and Electronic Document Delivery; – electronic document delivery; – virtual reference service "Ask a Librarian"; – KORUNB: the Virtual Reference Service of Corporation of Universal Scientific Libraries; – Virtual Center of Legal Information; – Virtual Center on the Activities of International Organizations; – Museum Program <i>on a Visit to Books</i> ; – library tours; – copying services.
7.	National Library of Uzbekistan	– document indexing: UDC, author number, etc; – booking electronic publications through the electronic catalog; – online and offline free access to scientific works via the <i>Scientific Works Database</i> “which contains more than 14 000 theses and more than 558 000 abstracts; – online and offline free access to full-text Database <i>NODIR</i> (nodir.natlib.uz) that contains rare books and manuscript collection of the NLU; – free access to the Digitalized Print Image Catalog Searching System; – free access to the Electronic Union Catalog that contains functions for searching books and their storage place in partner libraries; – free access to Foreign Electronic Open Assessed Resources.

### Analysis of library services

According to the results obtained in the survey, we found out the following:

- Free access to printed publications remains the main service for all libraries, without exception. Although this service has been transformed - the publication of interest can be read online. In this regard, it should be noted that libraries are following the changing format for providing information in the digital age, and they are actively introducing access to electronic databases. Digitization offers a new chance to shed light on unique collections that were previously inaccessible due to the limitations of analog formats.
- Some libraries run educational programs and services for students and teachers.
- Libraries provide effective support for research initiatives.

- Reference and bibliographic activity take a key place in the work of libraries.
- Libraries develop services aimed at the evaluation of individual scholars' papers with the help of bibliometric indicators.
- Libraries develop scientometric and webometric research.

Besides, National libraries in the CIS countries<sup>1</sup> develop programs and projects based on innovative approaches in the library and information field. They clarify the essence and specifics of innovations in library activities as well as the features of introducing innovations into library practice. The Libraries in CIS carry out scientific, methodological, organizational, and methodological work on the implementation of innovations (National Libraries of the CIS countries, 2011—2018, 2020). After analyzing the main range of services provided by libraries, we also noted that services remain traditional. Realizing the socio-cultural role, the library remains a repository not only of the book collection as one of the material objects of culture but, as Herzen (1954) wrote, it remains a “temple of thought”. In other words, the library implements an information and communication function along with a memorial function.

### Discussion

According to the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, the public library “the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups” (IFLA/UNESCO, 1994). Tikunova (2015) stressed that the Russian State Library (RSL), being the custodian of the world cultural heritage, plays a significant role in the system of information support in the field of culture:

- contributes to the information environment for developing education, science, and culture;
- cultivates information conditions that allow us to conduct an information search and, most importantly - to obtain information;
- carries out processing, evaluation, and generalization of information to provide complete and reliable information on the most pressing problems of the development of the sphere of culture;
- contributes to the organization, coordination, and cooperation activities for the creation and dissemination of information products created by libraries;
- reveals, summarizes, and disseminates the best experience of information work among the country's libraries

In connection with the above, we note that in growing public interest in science, the library can become a valid source of scientific information in the modern information space. This topic is particularly relevant in the context of the spread of fake news, including in the scientific information space. For example, James Lindsay, Helen Pluckrose and Peter Boghossian, using fictitious names, have been writing absurd articles and articles in respected and peer-reviewed scientific journals since August 2017. It should be said that at least 7 of 20 articles were published. Naturally, such an experiment calls into question the content of those journals, although it may also indicate problems in science itself (Voronin, 2018). The main methods that library uses to fight fake news are the following:

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<sup>1</sup> The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is a regional intergovernmental organization in Eastern Europe and Asia.

- Events for improving information literacy skills: training seminars on the identification of fake news, lectures related to the history of the creation of fake news, and the language features of fake texts.

- Lessons for developing critical thinking and working with news on the Internet, as well as comparing facts and analyzing the content of the content.

Thus, to identify fake news, it is necessary to know the basic essence of this phenomenon. In this case, it is vital to present a study conducted among students studying in the field of librarianship in Greece. The study aimed to identify the attitude of students towards the role of libraries in the fight against disinformation and fake news. One of the conclusions from the questionnaire survey of students was the thesis that the phenomenon of fake news is an opportunity to enhance the role of libraries in society (Skarpa & Garoufallou, 2022).

### Conclusion

Library as a source of reliable scientific information, can become an important source not only for the scientific community but also for all users of library services in general. Although in the modern information space, there are a large number of sources of information, the library remains an essential participant in information exchange. The library is a direct participant in scientific communication educational space that implements some memorial and social functions. It provides users with valid information, which is especially important in the modern information space. The implementation of a large number of these functions becomes possible through various forms of interaction, including the electronic environment. As a result, a modern library can provide optimal access to information and become a navigator in the modern information space.

The ability to search for reliable information can become one of the most critical skills for work and orientation in the modern media space. Libraries cannot take a neutral position in this regard. The primary way to solve this issue is to develop training programs to improve information literacy within the framework of library activities. The search for high-quality information requires special efforts and skills. Libraries can become learning platforms and intermediaries for all groups of the population without exception.

### Endnotes

1. Russian Public Opinion Research Center is the first and the largest polling firm in the Former Soviet Union (FSU).
2. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is a regional intergovernmental organization in Eastern Europe and Asia.

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