
Pedagogical possibilities of libraries

Dr. Karsten Schuldt (Swiss Institute of Information Science
& LIBREAS. Library Ideas)

Question of the presentation

Can - and should - libraries become teaching institutions?

Question of the presentation

- ❑ There is a constant discussion on this topic in Europe, North America, and Australia.
 - ❑ E.g. can school libraries become learning centers?
 - ❑ E.g. can academic libraries teach information competence and research skills?
 - ❑ E.g. can public libraries become places for lifelong learning and for informal learning?
- ❑ It is not really a discussion in the spheres of schools / universities or the public.

Beliefs

It is believed that education

(a) fosters economic growth

(b) lead to a better life for the people which are educated
(more contemplation, more possibilities)

(c) promotes democracy and self-awareness of the society

What is education?

- ❑ Planned and reflective situations of teaching and learning
 - ❑ always with educational targets
 - ❑ always in a constructed situation (room, infrastructure, who teaches what?)
 - ❑ always with an educational theory
 - ❑ always work, that needs to be done (by learners, teachers, infrastructure etc.)
-

Can a library facilitate this?

- ❑ Yes. But only, if she understands this as her strategic aim and acts accordingly
 - ❑ Collection development, room, infrastructure, personnel (and its skills) have to be oriented towards education
 - ❑ this is a longer process, needs strategic planning
 - ❑ learning possibilities have to be designed
 - ❑ In education, nothing happens by default
-

Lessons learned in Switzerland & Germany

- ❑ *Public library*: people come by choice, they also learn by choice
 - ❑ *School libraries*: loose coupling with the teachers works best
 - ❑ *Academic libraries*: ask, what the students (and researchers) really need to learn from the library
-

Other positions

- ❑ Libraries can also position themselves in other contexts concerning education
 - ❑ as institution which supports educational institutions
 - ❑ e.g. school libraries for “their” school, public libraries for schools and educational clubs in the area
 - ❑ as institution which actively support self-learning
 - ❑ e.g. guidance and promotion, collection development, setting examples
-

Is technology the solution?

- ❑ In education, technology is always a tool
 - ❑ Lots of proposals of technology (e.g. MOOC) have not lived up to their promises yet
 - ❑ Technology enables a greater dissemination of educational material, if those materials can be used (skills, infrastructure etc.)
 - ❑ somebody has to pay in a sustainable way
-

Necessary decisions

- ❑ A library can, but don't have to become an educational institution
 - ❑ The library has to choose and plan according to its choice
-