



GREEN LIBRARY IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION : WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COLLEGE LIBRARY

Sarmistha Adhikary

Librarian, AKPC Mahavidyalaya, Bengai. Hooghly, West Bengal.



ABSTRACT

The creation of green libraries is approaching a tipping point, generating a Green Library Movement, which is comprised of librarians, libraries, cities, towns, college and university campuses committed to greening libraries and reducing their environmental impact. Constructing a green library building using a performance standard like LEED is a way some libraries are choosing to become green and sustainable. Environmental challenges like energy depletion and climate change will influence the type of information resources and programs libraries will provide to their communities.

KEY WORDS: *Green Library Movement, green, stainable, libraries, programs, LEED, environment, climate change*

INTRODUCTION

With the technological advancement life style human beings are changing in a rapid speed. For developing more and more advancement in every sphere of our daily life we are using technology and natural resources abundantly. But in between something we lapse –that is the environmental balance or ecological balance. Environmental protection is an increasing issue all over the world. Ozone depletion, green house effect, global climate change or global warming etc. is the main issues in the environment. That is why the “green” concept has emerged today. If we can make our environment suitable then only the advancement of civilization is possible. The change of climate all over the world is making it vital to think about the green building for offices, archives, libraries etc. Many research and developments are going on. Scientists are working on this vital issue. Libraries are in a high profile position to become a role model for the community for taking the responsibility of practicing green strategies.

WHAT IS GREEN LIBRARY?

Oxford English Dictionary (1989) defined the term “green” as “pertaining to, or supporting environmentalism” (p. 811). The term “sustainable” relates to “forms of human economic activity and culture that do not lead to environmental degradation, esp. avoiding the long-term depletion of natural resources” (Oxford English, 2008).

The Online Dictionary of Library and Information Science (ODLIS) defines green libraries as a library designed to minimize negative impact on the natural environment and maximize indoor environmental quality by means of careful site selection, use of natural construction materials and biodegradable products, conservation of resources like water, energy, paper, and responsible waste disposal recycling, etc.

According to Wikipedia, “A green library is designed to minimize negative impact on the natural environment and maximize indoor environmental quality by means of careful site selection, use of natural construction materials and biodegradable products, conservation of resources (water, energy, paper) and responsible waste disposal (recycling etc)”.

The green library movement was started in early 1990s. The librarians are getting interested to develop such libraries that will minimize the consumption of electricity and be environment friendly. Green libraries are the structure that designed, built, renovated, operated or reused in an ecological and resource efficient manner. For these reasons “Green Library” is also known as “Sustainable Library” or “ Environment-friendly Library” or “ Eco-friendly Library”.

WHY GREEN LIBRARY:

Libraries always face problems of low budget and shortage of space. Books are also facing problems like dust, moisture, fungus, insects etc and they need special care. There are several reasons why libraries would want to build green or incorporate green features into their buildings.

First, the cost of constructing green buildings has become affordable. It is now possible for libraries to build green buildings on conventional budgets. Many national and international bodies are helping to make green library.

Second, the conventional energy resources are finite resources. Libraries require a significant amount of energy, water and other resources. It is vital to the health of the planet and our libraries’ budgets that we use these energy sources prudently. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, U.S. residential and commercial buildings account for 68% of electricity consumption and 39% of total energy use (Yudelson, 2007, p. 7).

Third, it is important that we reduce the carbon footprint of our buildings. The term carbon footprint is defined as “the total amount of greenhouse gases produced to directly and indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂)” (Time for Change, 2008).

The libraries that want to build green but cannot afford the cost of a new building can renovate an existing library building which could even lead to LEED certification under the LEED for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB) option. Low-budget academic institutions need to take some strategies which will make their existing library green and healthy.

COMPONENTS OF GREEN LIBRARY:

Along with the other libraries academic libraries have also joined in this green movement. Libraries in college or university has many components to plan for a proper environment friendly atmosphere. The followings are some of the important points of Green Library:

- Location: A library is the heart of any institution- may be college or university. It should be located from the noise zone like office, auditorium, play-ground so that the users can feel comfortable and concentrate on study.
- Light: Light is an important factor for reading. There should be sufficient number of windows, glass windows, skylights for natural lights.
- Air: Proper ventilation inside the library is required. Trees give pleasant air and maintain the natural balances. So plantation in the surroundings of library is needed. If possible indoor plantation can be done for the refreshment of the inside area of the library.
- Water: there should be availability of sufficient water near the library because water keeps the atmosphere clean, green and healthy. Saving water is also a part of the “green’ mission. Rain water and waste water can be reused by proper processing.
- Building construction: When librarians talk about green libraries what usually comes to mind are green library buildings. The California Integrated Waste Management Board defines a green or sustainable building as “a structure that is designed, built, renovated, operated, or reused in an ecological and resource efficient manner” (California Integrated, 2008). Green buildings are measured according to a rating system like the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification system, which was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. Since the introduction of LEED in 2000, it has become

the U.S. national standard for commercial and institutional buildings (U.S. Green, 2008). A recognized standard in India is IGBC (Indian Green Building Council)

HOW TO DEVELOP A GREEN LIBRARY IN A COLLEGE:

As earlier stated that library can become a role model for the community as well as the institute for the green movement. Library should create models and systems which will improve its users environmental awareness. There are many ways to develop a green library in college, some of them are:

- Use of paper: Papers should not be wasted if paper is saved, both sides of paper should be used.
- Electric power: Turning off lights, fans, computers when not in use. Natural lights should be utilized as much as possible during day time. Practice the use of natural cooling agents during summer rather than the air conditioner.
- Plantation: Cultivating more and more plants in the library surroundings. Rooftop planting is a good idea. Students should be encouraged in planting trees in the institute through NSS, projects or other schemes. Library can be included as a part of the NSS project which could help in plantation.
- Maintenance of wastage: Wastages of library should be throw in proper place (use bin or trash), not in common space. A separate container can be used for reusable products like pens, bottles, cans and papers.
- Use of water: Water should not be wasted. There should be any leakage in taps which should be opened as necessary so that a little water can be saved for the future.
- Use of wooden or bamboo furniture rather than the steel because wooden furniture can be regenerable . Racks, chairs, table, cabinets, counters, shelves should be wooden as much as possible. Use of wooden stair-cases inside the library be suitable, though the initial budget will be high but it will be environment-friendly.
- Library can use wool brick instead of burnt brick
- Solar tiles or panel can be used for roof
- Avoid using toxic chemical cleaners and switch to environmentally friendly cleaning products because some cleaners can cause allergies and asthma attacks in users. Green cleaners emit fewer fumes, and some are even made with plant-based ingredients.

BENEFITS OF GREEN LIBRARY IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION:

A green library in an academic institution can provide a pleasant atmosphere to its users. This includes;

- A better healthy environment
- Secure the resources for the future generation
- Be a part of the earth saving mission
- Improve the quality of education
- Improve the mental health

GREEN LIBRARIANS-ROLE:

Librarians in an academic institution have significant role to improve and strengthen the environmental consciousness. They can inspire he students by

- Preparing and displaying charts on conservation of natural resources.
- Organizing programmes, competitions on green movement,
- Providing facilities for video on environmental issues,
- Developing collection of materials on energy conservation,
- Organizing, discussion, seminar, conferences on the topic to encourage other librarians.
- Creating library blogs and set link to the environmental issues,
- Developing outreach relationship with the patron group interested on environmental concerns,

➤ Involving themselves in different activities, projects related to the issue.

GREEN LIBRARIES IN INDIA-SOME EXAMPLES:

India has been ranked third on the list of top 10 countries in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design outside America, according to the latest US Green Building Council report. Some of them are:

1. Anna Centenary Library (ACL):
2. Karnataka university library Dharwad:
3. Mumbai University Library:
4. Madras University Library:

Other green libraries initiatives in India are:

- Calcutta University Library
- Delhi University Library
- Perma Karpo Library, Ladakh in Indian Himalayas

CONCLUSION:

Libraries play a very crucial role in the society and therefore also in the environmental world. Librarians have to take a clean stand and create visible green image for the libraries. They should take some decisions to make green library. And also take part in green library movement. Many national and international bodies are helping to make green library. Libraries have to be a role model, encourage other institution by supporting a life-long reading behaviour, so that everyone should realize that in libraries we work for a better future. So go green.

REFERENCES:

- Andrew Logan & Co, Tomorrow's Green Libraries,
- Antonelli, M. (2009). Green libraries: a website for information about green and sustainable libraries. Retrieved March 9, 2010 from <http://www.greenlibraries.org/>
- Chowdhury, G. (2012), "Building environmentally sustainable information services: A green IS research agenda", Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, Vol. 63 No. 4, pp. 633-647.
- http://www.libraries.vic.gov.au/downloads/Shared_Leadership_Presentations_2012/report_tomorrows_green_library.pdf (13, April, 2017)
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_library (10, Feb, 2018).
- <http://www.all-recycling-facts.com/benefits-of-going-green.html> (18, August, 2017)
- Greene, Kelvin, "Greening Your Library: WHAT YOU CAN DO" , Reaching Forward— South Conference Springfield, Illinois, 2007
- <https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAB> (10 Feb, 2018)
- http://www.libraries.vic.gov.au/downloads/Shared_Leadership_Presentations_2012/report_tomorrows_green_lib
- Time for Change. (2008, September 9). What is a carbon footprint - definition. Retrieved 10/26/2008 from <http://timeforchange.org/what-is-a-carbon-footprint-definition>
- Yudelson, Jerry. (2007). Green building A to Z: Understanding the language of green building. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.