Chapter 18
Libraries, Digitized Cultural Heritage, and Social Cohesion of Smart Cities:
Model-Like LIS-Educational Implementations in Hungary

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ABSTRACT

Creating the complex service system of smart cities provides a new opportunity for the proportion and composition of available digital services to serve the satisfaction and the optimal functioning of society. Shaping the network services provided by LAM institutions is just as important in the social life of smart cities as defining the roles of public institutions. The authors of this chapter seek to identify how digital repositories can be effectively interpreted as modules of a complex service system. Five different module models are introduced based on the projects conducted by the Institute of Library and Information Science of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. These modules, focusing on different aspects of user interest and activity, are suitable for strengthening social cohesion in the everyday life of smart cities by involving cultural heritage.

INTRODUCTION

The population of future smart cities can become an empathetic, socially responsible community of connected people if technological developments serve not only everyday and superficial community situations, but deeper cohesion as well. Numerous implemented and pilot projects prove that technology built on databases and network services transforms and facilitates traffic, communication, shopping, and the operation of households. To achieve changes that serve a deeper social cohesion, however, utilizing databases managed by libraries, archives, and museums (LAM) will be necessary.

Background

Smart city as a term was derived from the adoption and application of smart mobile services through practical data management networks for all components and layers of a city. (Gavalas et al., 2017) Internet of Things (IoT), big data, and cloud computing as background of smart solutions will help the cities and the citizens to deal with large-scale streams of data and complex services. The most studied aspects of smart city definitions are smart governance, smart transportation, smart energy and smart environment based on sustainability issues, but literature also provides research on other components such as smart people, smart economy, smart mobility, and smart living. (Kirimtat et al., 2020) From the perspective of Library and Information Science the smart city environment opens new possibilities for the LAM institutes to care for and disseminate cultural heritage (Angelidou&Stylianidis, 2020) and offers new opportunities to develop online library services and to rethink the role of library spaces in the functioning of a smart city.

The role of the library as a public space is already changing so it can integrate organically into the life of future cities by undertaking new, socially established functions. The library is a community institution present in all municipalities, and it has the most widespread network of all cultural institutions. It has the ability to reach all social classes, and its different types (national library, public library, academic library, school library) cover the needs of the widest possible range of social circles. Its services are available not only on site, but through mobile library solutions (e.g., library bus) and naturally, in the 21stcentury, remotely as well. The essential nature of the library was also revealed during the COVID-19 epidemiological situation, when the institutions provided numerous innovative solutions to their users. It is important to note that most library services are free, and it is one of its primary missions to reduce social inequalities and to ensure equal opportunities. With their programs, libraries contribute to the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the UN by launching worldwide actions promoting healthy lifestyle, financial awareness, consumer protection, etc. The library has become more than a storehouse for books; it is a multifunctional and democratic public institution. It provides credible information in our world burdened by fake news, and it performs its functions by involving library professionals who work according to codes of ethics. It provides more and more services that are considered atypical (e.g., maintaining community gardens, supporting the launch of start-ups, organizing diverse events), which provide excellent opportunities for strengthening social cohesion by relying on this institutional network with millennia of experience.

Therefore, it is obvious that in an era of network services built on sensor signals and controlled by mobile devices the library will by no means remain solely a physical access point to the recorded knowledge of humanity (Fanea-Ivanovici&Pană, 2020). In addition to the role of the library space and the vision for services provided on site, it is similarly important that the knowledge repositories of cultural heritage

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