A Feasibility Study for Renovation of Public Libraries in South Korea

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BACKGROUND
1. Influx of western civilization after 'the Korean War (1953-1955)' and advent of 'modern' public library

2. Remarkable growth of public libraries since 1990s
   - Cultural & economic development
   - Emphasis on social responsibility to meet intellectual needs for the public

3. Efforts for qualitative growth of public libraries since 2009
   - Improving old-aged library facilities: 31% of total public libraries are old-aged libraries

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY
(1) To analyze current physical and functional status and needs of old-aged public libraries in Busan, South Korea
(2) To specify the justification to renovate old-aged public libraries in Busan, South Korea
(3) To suggest the strategies to renovate old-aged public libraries in Busan, South Korea

A Case Study: 8 public libraries in the Busan Metropolitan city area
- 8 old-aged public libraries established between 1970s and 1980s among total 38 public libraries in Busan, South Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of PL</th>
<th>Established Year</th>
<th>GFA (Cross Floor Area)</th>
<th># of Collection</th>
<th># of Librarians</th>
<th># of Population Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1,803 m²</td>
<td>219,692</td>
<td>8 (16)</td>
<td>44,521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>12,589 m²</td>
<td>819,464</td>
<td>29 (43)</td>
<td>134,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>1,496 m²</td>
<td>157,728</td>
<td>2 (3)</td>
<td>109,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1,072 m²</td>
<td>164,744</td>
<td>8 (16)</td>
<td>160,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>1,716 m²</td>
<td>195,808</td>
<td>8 (15)</td>
<td>136,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1,370 m²</td>
<td>180,562</td>
<td>8 (15)</td>
<td>121,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>6,170 m²</td>
<td>330,628</td>
<td>14 (33)</td>
<td>131,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1,670 m²</td>
<td>233,640</td>
<td>7 (16)</td>
<td>238,228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria for Analysis
- Integrated/common Approach
  - Political Factor: Suitability of laws and regulations, Relation to higher policy
  - Economic Factor: Economic efficiency of renovation, Economic value of the library building after renovation
  - Social Factor: Change in the role and function of public library
- Individual Approach
  - Physical Factor: Building aging level, Appropriateness of building size, Appropriateness in composing space
  - Professional Factor: Appropriateness of space and facility from the viewpoint of practitioners, library staffs
  - User Use Factor: Appropriateness of space and facility from the viewpoint of users, Connection with the local community

FINDINGS: Justification for Renovation of 8 Public Libraries

1. Political Feasibility
   - Revision of Library Act in 2007: renovation to observe related regulations and rules as well as Library Act are required
   - National library policy to renovate old-aged libraries was announced in 2014

2. Economic Feasibility
   - Citizens' willingness to pay for the renovation of public libraries; the economic impact of the investment is proven as follows:
     - Annual WTP (Willing To Pay) $99.89
     - ROI (Return On Investment) 3.66
     - Investment Cost for Renovation 20-90% of rebuilding costs

3. Social Feasibility
   - Changes in the roles and functions of libraries in social changes

4. Physical Feasibility
   - Deterioration in building & Low structural stability
   - Insufficient space for library collection
   - Lack of various spaces for educational and social activities
   - Excessive space for studying
   - No consideration for the disabled and the elderly

5. Professional Feasibility
   - Library staffs' perception in problems of 8 old-aged libraries [the result of interview]
     - Closed spatial structure, low accessibility, inefficient space application
     - Insufficient storage space for library collection
     - Lack of various spaces for educational and social activities (i.e., lecture room, audio-visual room, group study room, book cafe, etc.)
     - Excessive space for studying
     - No consideration for the disabled and the elderly

6. Use Feasibility
   - 488 library users' perception and proposal [the results of survey]
     - High demand to improve current library facilities [5 scale]

IMPLICATION OF THE FINDING
1. Priority-setting for renovation of 8 public libraries for national and local government's economic support
   - The oldest library in the year of construction/establishment
   - Less energy-efficient library
   - Library with higher demand for renovation
   - Library to require more space reconstruction

2. Suggestions for renovation of old-aged public libraries in Busan, South Korea
   - Creating 'innovative' space to play new roles and functions of public libraries in the 21st century (freeing from physical facilities for studying space in the traditional libraries)
   - Rearranging from collection-centered spaces to service-centered spaces
   - Expanding the library functions from a repository of library collection into educational and cultural centers
   - Reorganizing the library spaces from quiet reading rooms into active interaction
   - Designing open, inviting, accessible space
   - Accepting social changes and demands such as an aging society, multi-cultural society, eco-friendly society, technologically innovative society, etc.
   - Distributing library functions through collaborating with local libraries, etc. (e.g., a special library for business services, a special library for rich user experience with high-tech, etc.)