



Study of Historical and Cultural Significance of Library Collections in East Midnapur: Preservation Imperatives

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Abstract

The library collections in East Midnapur, West Bengal, hold immense historical and cultural significance, representing a rich tapestry of regional history, traditional knowledge, and literary heritage. These collections, however, are under threat due to environmental factors, lack of preservation facilities, and the growing obsolescence of traditional preservation methods. This paper explores the historical and cultural value of these collections, examines the challenges in preserving them, and identifies strategic imperatives for ensuring their longevity. By integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods, including case studies and stakeholder interviews, this study provides actionable recommendations for sustainable preservation practices.

Keywords: East Midnapur, Obsolescence, Sustainable

1. Introduction

Libraries serve as repositories of a region's cultural and intellectual heritage, and the collections in East Midnapur are no exception. Housing rare manuscripts, colonial records, folk literature, and early publications in Bengali, these collections offer invaluable insights into the region's history, socio-political movements, and cultural evolution. Despite their importance, these materials are at risk due to environmental degradation, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient awareness about preservation methods. Studies indicate that over 60% of library materials in East Midnapur are in a fragile state, with common issues such as mold, insect damage, and discoloration. Furthermore, the 2020 Cyclone Amphan caused extensive damage to several libraries in coastal areas, highlighting the urgent need for disaster-resilient preservation strategies.

The History of Libraries

The Ancient World

When first established, libraries functioned similarly to record rooms or archives in that they housed records. As far back as written records can be traced, libraries have played this role. An example of a library or archive is a temple in the Babylonian city of Nippur that dates back to the third millennium BCE. The temple's chambers were filled with clay tablets. Similarly, Egyptian digs at Tell el-Amarna have uncovered troves of Assyrian clay tablets dating back to the second millennium BCE. The systematic archive of 25,000 tablets, collected from temples across his empire, was preserved by the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (668–c. 627 BCE). It was usual for wars and political upheavals to wipe up such collections. To establish the supremacy of his dynasty, Emperor Shih Huang-ti of the Ch'in dynasty in ancient China had all historical records prior to his reign destroyed. Historical texts were restored, literature was fostered, and early classification systems were formed under the succeeding Han dynasty (206 BCE). Confucian classics, poetry, philosophy, military works, and medical texts were all eventually incorporated into these systems. During this time, libraries flourished in China because the formation of the civil service system necessitated the memorizing of classical works.

Ancient Greek and Alexandrian

The classical world was the birthplace of the Western idea of a library. Libraries were commonplace in Greek temples, and private book collections were established by people like Euripides. In the fourth century BCE, Athens saw the establishment of both philosophical schools and public libraries. One of the most renowned collections, meticulously prepared for scientific study, was created by Aristotle's Peripatetic school. The Library of Alexandria, founded in the 3rd century BCE by Ptolemy I Soter and later extended by his son, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, was inspired by Aristotle's collection. Its original intent was to compile and



organize all of Greek literature for the benefit of scholars. Famous scholars such as Callimachus and Eratosthenes worked in this library, which was situated in the Mouseion, a temple of the Muses. It had hundreds of thousands of scrolls.

The Pergamum Company

Between 197 and 159 BCE, Attalus I Soter and Eumenes II established a library in Pergamum that competed with Alexandria's. The development of parchment, or charta pergamena, by Pergamum is lauded since it outlasted papyrus. Supposedly given to Cleopatra by Mark Antony, this library eventually bequeathed 200,000 books to Rome.

Rome

Notable classical Romans like Cicero and Lucullus possessed substantial private libraries, which served as a mark of social rank. Asinius Pollio, who succeeded Julius Caesar, was the first emperor to build public libraries; emperors like Trajan, whose Bibliotheca Ulpia doubled as a library and record office, further expanded upon this idea. Books were highly valued in Roman society, and this was further emphasized by the proliferation of libraries in both public and private residences.

Ancient Byzantine Empire

The libraries of Constantinople kept the Greek classics safe for more than a thousand years. Byzantine libraries brought the majority of Greece's literary legacy to Western Europe, laying the groundwork for subsequent studies, even though losses occurred in the 9th century when genuine works were replaced with summaries.

Global Islam

Libraries played an essential role in religious and intellectual life once Islam spread. A secular library flourished during the reign of monarchs like Baghdad's Abbasid caliph Al-Ma'mun, while mosques served as repositories for sacred books. Huge book collections sprang up in places like Baghdad, Córdoba, and Cairo after the 8th century, when papermaking was brought to the region from China. Monasteries in Europe, especially those belonging to the Benedictine order, were the first places where books were arranged and kept manuscripts during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Upon their emergence in the 11th century, universities became hubs of learning, and their holdings were subsequently expanded by monastic and private collections. Humanists such as Petrarch and Boccaccio sought out and copied ancient manuscripts, sparking a renaissance of classical learning during the Renaissance. Public and private libraries were able to expand their book holdings when Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press made books more widely available. Medicean-Laurentian Library in Florence, the Vatican Library, and the Escorial Library in Madrid were all notable libraries.

Conflicts between religions and the Reformation

While many Protestant territories saw their abbey libraries destroyed during the Reformation, Catholic countries such as France and Spain saw their collections preserved and even grown. The confiscated monastic possessions in Germany, among other countries, gave rise to new university libraries and local libraries.

The 1700s and 1800s

National libraries were founded during this time from private collections. The Bibliothèque Nationale in France and the British Museum Library (1753) both drew on collections amassed by members of the French nobility and royal families. During this time, library design and cataloging methods were developing, which paved the way for how libraries are organized today. A lot of problems, like insufficient cataloging and bad administration, slowed the fast expansion of libraries in the nineteenth century. The development of public libraries in England signified a change toward community-based access to information, while innovations such as Antonio Panizzi's procedures for cataloging at the British Museum established new norms.

Beyond the Twentieth Century

Libraries were never the same after the introduction of IT. The conventional function of libraries as physical storehouse of information was challenged by computer-based systems and electronic databases, which offered unprecedented access to information. Librarians had to



adapt to new digital tools and user training as online catalogs and virtual libraries came out. Libraries continue to play an important role in society as information centers, evolving to meet the needs of both traditional and digital users. This paper aims to underscore the historical and cultural significance of these collections and propose effective measures for their protection.

2. Literature Review

Dasgupta, S. (2015) Dasgupta, in their study titled “Digitization in Public Libraries of India: Challenges and Opportunities,” highlighted the historical value of rural library collections, particularly those containing records from the 18th and 19th centuries. The study pointed out that these collections are critical for understanding regional socio-economic histories, including land reforms and cultural practices. Dasgupta concluded that while digitization offers a solution to preserving these fragile documents, limited funding and lack of technical expertise are major barriers, especially in rural areas like East Midnapur. **Sharma, N. (2019)** Sharma’s research, “The Role of Digital India in Library Modernization,” explored how government initiatives have influenced library preservation efforts. Sharma found that libraries under the Digital India campaign had increased access to high-resolution scanning technologies, allowing for the digitization of valuable historical records. However, the study noted that only 30% of rural libraries had utilized these facilities due to inconsistent funding. Sharma concluded that more targeted support and training programs are required to maximize the campaign’s impact. **Ghosh, S., & Dutta, R. (2023)** In their paper “Digitization of Library Collections in East Midnapur: A Regional Perspective,” Ghosh and Dutta analyzed the preservation practices of libraries in East Midnapur. They found that 35% of libraries had initiated digitization projects but faced significant challenges like poor infrastructure, high humidity levels, and lack of skilled personnel. Their conclusion emphasized the importance of localized solutions, such as community-driven preservation programs and partnerships with private organizations. **Roy, A., & Roy and Basu, in their study titled “Challenges in Digitizing Rural Libraries in India,”** identified extreme climatic conditions as a significant threat to library collections. Their research found that over 45% of libraries in West Bengal, including East Midnapur, reported damage due to high humidity and flooding. They concluded that digitization could mitigate these risks but stressed the need for disaster-resilient infrastructure. **Chakraborty, T., & Banerjee, S. (2020)** In “Technological Advances in Preservation in West Bengal Libraries,” Chakraborty and Banerjee discussed how advanced tools like cloud storage and optical character recognition (OCR) had improved accessibility and preservation of historical records. However, they noted that 50% of rural libraries lacked access to these technologies due to financial constraints. The authors concluded that funding from government and private sectors is crucial for scaling these efforts. **Patil, R. (2021)** Patil’s paper “Digital Preservation and User Accessibility in Rural Libraries” examined how digitization enhances public access to historical materials. The study revealed that digitized collections were accessed 70% more frequently than physical copies, particularly by researchers and students. Patil concluded that while digital preservation expands accessibility, issues like server maintenance and cybersecurity need to be addressed for long-term sustainability. **Kumar, S., & Gupta, M. (2018)** Kumar and Gupta’s research “Preservation Strategies in Indian University Libraries” focused on integrating modern and traditional preservation methods. They found that university libraries in urban areas had successfully digitized 60% of their rare collections, but rural libraries, including those in East Midnapur, were far behind. They concluded that a hybrid approach, combining traditional preservation techniques with digital tools, would be most effective. **Mehta, K. (2021)** Mehta, in their study “Cost-Benefit Analysis of Library Digitization in India,” explored the financial implications of digitization. The research found that while the initial cost of digitization for rural libraries averaged ₹15–20 lakhs, the long-term benefits, such as reduced maintenance and wider accessibility, justified the investment. Mehta concluded that public-private partnerships could alleviate financial barriers. **Rana, P., & Verma, D. (2022)** In “Overcoming Resistance to Change in Library Digitization,” Rana and Verma examined the psychological and institutional resistance to adopting digital preservation.



They noted that 30% of library staff in traditional institutions were hesitant to use new technologies due to lack of training and fear of redundancy. The study concluded that fostering a culture of learning and innovation is crucial for successful implementation. **Sen, A. (2016)** Sen's research "Preserving Regional Manuscripts in Bengal" focused on historical manuscripts in rural libraries. The study found that 40% of collections in East Midnapur consisted of unique records related to agrarian policies and cultural practices. Sen concluded that digitizing these collections is essential to prevent loss and to support academic research. **Chatterjee, P. (2017)** In their paper "Role of Libraries in Cultural Preservation," Chatterjee analyzed how libraries act as custodians of cultural identity. The study emphasized that the fragile condition of manuscripts and records in West Bengal libraries, including East Midnapur, necessitates urgent preservation. Chatterjee concluded that integrating digital tools with traditional methods would preserve the cultural significance of these collections. **Ahmed, Z., & Khan, F. (2018)** In "Challenges in Digitizing Historical Collections in India," Ahmed and Khan identified funding limitations and lack of skilled personnel as primary barriers. They found that 75% of rural libraries lacked the infrastructure for digitization. The authors concluded that capacity-building programs and government subsidies are essential for addressing these challenges. **Das, P. (2020)** Das's paper "Impact of Digitization on Public Libraries in West Bengal" explored how digital technologies had transformed accessibility and preservation. The study found that digitization reduced material deterioration by 50% and increased user engagement by 60%. Das concluded that prioritizing digitization projects for historically significant collections is critical. **Reddy, M. (2021)** Reddy, in their study "Preservation Imperatives in Indian Rural Libraries," highlighted that rural libraries often house undocumented historical records. The research found that 30% of collections in rural libraries are at risk of permanent loss due to lack of preservation efforts. Reddy concluded that community-driven initiatives and government intervention are essential to prevent this loss. **Mukherjee, R. (2023)** Mukherjee's paper "Digital Archiving in Rural India: A Case Study of East Midnapur" examined how digital technologies can address preservation challenges. The study revealed that libraries adopting cloud storage and high-resolution scanning saw a 40% improvement in material preservation. Mukherjee concluded that collaborative efforts between stakeholders are necessary for sustainable preservation.

3. Objectives

1. To analyze the historical and cultural significance of library collections in East Midnapur.
2. To identify the current challenges in preserving these collections.

4. Research Questions

1. What is the historical and cultural value of library collections in East Midnapur?
2. What are the primary threats to the preservation of these collections?

5. Methodology

Data Collection

Primary Data: Interviews with library staff, historians, and preservation experts; physical inspections of library collections.

Secondary Data: Analysis of archival records, government reports, and scholarly articles.

Sampling: 10 libraries in East Midnapur, selected for their historical significance and collection size.

Analytical Framework: SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of existing preservation practices.

6. Data Analysis & Interpretation

Table 1: Historical and Cultural Value of Library Collections

| Library Name | Collection Highlights | Historical Significance | Cultural Significance | Interpretation |
|------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Central Library, | Manuscripts on 18th-century land reforms | Primary source for colonial | Reflects agrarian traditions | The library preserves rare documents vital for |



| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| East Midnapur | | governance studies | | academic and cultural research. |
| Rural Library, Contai | Freedom movement pamphlets and letters | Documents India's independence struggle | Highlights local leaders' contributions | These records bridge regional history with national movements. |
| Folk Literature Archive | Collections of medieval Bengali poetry and oral literature | Preserves historical literary styles | Promotes regional language and folklore | A critical repository for studying Bengali heritage and storytelling traditions. |
| Heritage Library | 19th-century records of local governance and tax reforms | Chronicles socio-political evolution in rural Bengal | Represents administrative practices under colonial rule | Aids in understanding socio-economic structures of the past. |

Table 2: Challenges in Preservation

| Challenge | Data (% Libraries Affected) | Observations | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Environmental Factors | 90% | High humidity and pest infestations leading to mold and physical damage. | Climate-controlled facilities are urgently required. |
| Infrastructure Deficiencies | 80% | Lack of proper shelving, acid-free storage materials, and preservation tools. | Upgrading infrastructure will reduce degradation of fragile documents. |
| Funding Constraints | 70% | Insufficient budgets for preservation, digitization, and staff training. | Increased financial support from public-private partnerships is necessary. |
| Lack of Awareness and Expertise | 60% | Most staff have limited knowledge of modern preservation techniques and rely on outdated methods. | Regular training programs are essential to improve preservation practices. |
| Natural Disasters | 50% | Libraries in coastal areas reported damage from flooding during Cyclone Amphan (2020). | Disaster-resilient strategies, such as waterproof storage, must be implemented. |

Table 3: Potential Strategies for Sustainable Preservation

| Strategy | Libraries Implementing (%) | Effectiveness | Challenges in Implementation | Interpretation |
|---|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| Use of Traditional Preservation Methods | 50% | Cost-effective for immediate application (e.g., neem leaves as pest repellents). | Limited effectiveness for long-term preservation. | Combines low-cost measures with modern techniques for short-term protection. |



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|-------------------------------------|-----|--|--|---|
| Adoption of Digitization Technology | 30% | Reduces physical handling, enhances accessibility, and prevents further deterioration. | High initial costs for scanners and cloud storage systems. | Essential for long-term preservation and broader accessibility. |
| Community Engagement Programs | 30% | Mobilizes local support and raises awareness about the value of preservation. | Sustaining volunteer participation and securing funding. | Strengthens preservation efforts through public involvement and resource pooling. |
| Disaster-Resilient Storage | 20% | Protects collections from flooding and other environmental hazards. | Expensive to implement in all libraries. | Crucial for libraries in high-risk areas such as coastal regions. |

Table 4: SWOT Analysis

| Aspect | Details | Interpretation |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Strengths | Rich historical and cultural collections unique to East Midnapur. | The collections are invaluable for academic and cultural research. |
| Weaknesses | Lack of infrastructure, funding, and trained staff. | Addressing these weaknesses is critical for effective preservation. |
| Opportunities | Government initiatives like Digital India; technological advancements in preservation tools. | Potential to modernize libraries and increase accessibility through digitization. |
| Threats | Environmental factors, natural disasters, and resistance to adopting modern techniques. | Urgent action is needed to safeguard collections against these threats. |

The data analysis reveals that while the library collections in East Midnapur hold immense historical and cultural value, their preservation is hindered by multiple challenges, including environmental factors, inadequate infrastructure, and financial constraints. Traditional preservation methods, though widely used, are not sufficient for long-term protection. Digitization and disaster-resilient infrastructure emerge as critical solutions, but their adoption is limited by funding and technical barriers. Collaborative efforts among stakeholders and sustainable financial models are essential to implement effective preservation strategies.

7. Results and Discussion

Importance of Preservation The study highlights the critical importance of preserving library collections in East Midnapur to safeguard the region's historical and cultural identity. These collections, which include rare manuscripts, freedom movement documents, and Bengali literary works, are invaluable for academic research, regional history, and cultural heritage. Preserving these materials ensures that future generations can access and benefit from their wealth of knowledge. The study revealed that 90% of libraries reported significant threats to their collections due to environmental factors such as high humidity and pest infestations. Additionally, 50% of libraries in coastal areas faced damage during events like Cyclone Amphan (2020). Without immediate intervention, the region risks losing irreplaceable historical records that provide insights into colonial governance, agrarian practices, and



regional folklore. Preserving these collections is not just a practical necessity but a moral obligation for cultural custodianship.

Integrating Traditional and Modern Methods One of the primary objectives of the study was to evaluate strategies for preserving library collections by integrating traditional and modern techniques. The findings underscore that while traditional methods are cost-effective and accessible, modern approaches provide long-term solutions and enhanced accessibility.

Traditional Methods

- **Natural Pest Repellents:** Many libraries use neem leaves and camphor to protect collections from pests. This method, implemented in 50% of libraries, is effective in controlling damage but lacks durability over extended periods.
- **Acid-Free Storage Materials:** Only 20% of libraries use acid-free paper and archival boxes, which significantly reduce the rate of degradation.
- **Regular Maintenance:** Cleaning and organizing materials regularly was observed in 60% of libraries, helping to prevent physical damage.

While traditional methods are affordable and easy to implement, they provide only temporary protection and do not address challenges like digitization or disaster resilience.

Modern Techniques

- **High-Resolution Digitization:** Implemented in 30% of libraries, this technique reduces physical handling and preserves collections digitally, ensuring broader accessibility and long-term preservation.
- **Disaster-Resilient Storage Facilities:** Only 20% of libraries have adopted flood-resistant storage, essential for libraries in coastal regions vulnerable to natural disasters.
- **Machine Learning for Cataloging:** Emerging tools for automated cataloging and damage detection are promising but are yet to be implemented widely due to high costs.

The integration of these methods is key. For example, digitizing manuscripts ensures their survival even if physical copies are lost or damaged. However, traditional methods remain critical for immediate, low-cost preservation in resource-constrained libraries.

Role of Stakeholders

The results underscore the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders in achieving sustainable preservation. Libraries in East Midnapur face financial and technical challenges that cannot be addressed by institutions alone. Stakeholder involvement is essential for pooling resources, raising awareness, and implementing preservation strategies. Initiatives like Digital India and the National Mission on Libraries (NML) provide funding and technical support. However, the study revealed that only 30% of libraries had successfully utilized these programs due to bureaucratic delays and lack of awareness. Government support is crucial for building infrastructure, such as climate-controlled storage rooms and disaster-resilient facilities. Universities and research institutions play a vital role in documenting and digitizing collections. Collaborative projects between libraries and academic institutions can facilitate the sharing of technology and expertise. For example, digitization projects supported by university grants could significantly improve access to historical materials. NGOs and private organizations can bridge funding gaps and provide technical training for library staff. The study identified community-driven initiatives in 30% of libraries, which proved effective in raising awareness and mobilizing resources. Community engagement emerged as a critical factor in preservation. Libraries with active community involvement, such as volunteer programs and fundraising drives, demonstrated higher success in implementing preservation strategies. Public awareness campaigns highlighting the cultural importance of these collections can foster local support and encourage donations.

Current Challenges in Preserving Library Collections in East Midnapur

Environmental Factors: The tropical climate of East Midnapur poses significant challenges, with high humidity and fluctuating temperatures causing mold growth, paper discoloration, and material decay. Pest infestations, including termites and silverfish, further exacerbate the damage. Additionally, libraries in coastal regions are highly vulnerable to natural disasters,



such as Cyclone Amphan in 2020, which severely impacted nearly 50% of the libraries, highlighting the urgent need for disaster-resilient preservation strategies.

Infrastructural Deficiencies: Most libraries in East Midnapur lack the necessary climate-controlled storage facilities to mitigate environmental effects. Over 80% of libraries rely on outdated shelving systems and do not use acid-free storage materials, which accelerates the degradation of fragile documents. Furthermore, inadequate space in many libraries hinders the safe storage and proper organization of their collections, leaving valuable resources at risk of damage.

Financial Constraints: A significant barrier to preservation is insufficient funding, with approximately 70% of libraries reporting inadequate budgets for preservation activities. High costs associated with digitization, such as purchasing high-resolution scanners and cloud storage systems, further restrict progress. The average cost of digitizing a single library ranges between ₹15–20 lakhs, making it unattainable for many institutions. Additionally, the heavy dependence on irregular government grants limits the consistent implementation of preservation efforts.

Lack of Awareness and Expertise: A lack of formal training among library staff is a major issue, with over 60% of personnel unfamiliar with modern preservation techniques. This gap leads to reliance on outdated practices and increases the risk of material mishandling. Resistance to change among some staff members, often due to fears of redundancy or discomfort with new technology, further slows the adoption of advanced preservation methods. Public awareness about the importance of preservation is also limited, reducing community engagement and support.

Technological Barriers: Only 30% of libraries in East Midnapur have initiated digitization efforts, primarily due to the high costs of necessary equipment, such as scanners and optical character recognition (OCR) software. Even for libraries that have digitized collections, issues such as server maintenance and cybersecurity risks threaten the sustainability of digital archives. Additionally, many libraries still rely on obsolete technology for cataloging and preservation, hindering efficiency and innovation.

Natural and Anthropogenic Risks: Improper handling of materials, neglect, and a lack of regular maintenance accelerate the deterioration of library collections. Furthermore, the absence of disaster-resilient infrastructure, such as waterproof storage or flood barriers, leaves libraries highly susceptible to damage during extreme weather events and natural disasters, especially in vulnerable coastal areas.

Policy and Administrative Challenges: While initiatives like Digital India and the National Mission on Libraries aim to support preservation, only 30% of libraries have effectively utilized these programs due to bureaucratic delays and lack of localized solutions. Moreover, preservation efforts often remain fragmented, with limited coordination among libraries, government agencies, and academic institutions, reducing the overall impact of these initiatives.

8. Future Scopes

- ✚ The adoption of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for automated cataloging, damage assessment, and restoration of historical documents can significantly enhance preservation efforts.
- ✚ Establishing climate-controlled and disaster-resistant storage facilities in vulnerable areas, especially coastal regions like East Midnapur, can mitigate risks associated with environmental factors and natural disasters.
- ✚ Expanding community-driven programs through workshops, awareness campaigns, and volunteer initiatives can mobilize local resources and create a stronger sense of ownership for preserving cultural heritage.
- ✚ Collaborating with private organizations and NGOs to secure funding, technological expertise, and equipment can accelerate the implementation of modern preservation techniques in underfunded libraries.



- ✚ Incorporating library preservation studies into academic programs can produce a skilled workforce equipped with knowledge of both traditional and modern preservation methods, ensuring sustainability in the long term.

9. Conclusion

The preservation of library collections in East Midnapur is a critical endeavor that transcends the safeguarding of physical materials, encompassing the protection of the region's cultural identity, historical records, and intellectual heritage. This study highlights that these collections, containing rare manuscripts, colonial records, and folk literature, are invaluable resources for understanding socio-political movements and cultural evolution. However, their survival is threatened by a range of challenges, including environmental factors, inadequate infrastructure, financial constraints, and a lack of technical expertise. With 90% of libraries reporting damage due to high humidity and pest infestations and 50% facing additional risks from natural disasters like Cyclone Amphan, immediate action is necessary to prevent the loss of irreplaceable historical artifacts. The integration of traditional and modern preservation methods emerges as the most effective strategy for addressing these challenges. While traditional approaches such as the use of natural pest repellents and regular maintenance offer cost-effective and immediate solutions, they provide only temporary protection. Modern techniques, including high-resolution digitization and disaster-resilient storage facilities, ensure long-term preservation and accessibility but require significant investment and technical expertise. The successful implementation of these methods relies heavily on the collaboration of government bodies, academic institutions, NGOs, and local communities. Stakeholders must work together to mobilize resources, raise awareness, and create sustainable financial and operational models for preservation. The study also underscores the importance of leveraging emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning to enhance cataloging, damage assessment, and restoration efforts. Additionally, fostering community engagement and integrating preservation studies into academic curricula will ensure the development of a skilled workforce and a collective sense of responsibility toward safeguarding cultural heritage. By addressing these challenges through a comprehensive and collaborative approach, the library collections of East Midnapur can be preserved for future generations, ensuring their continued relevance as repositories of knowledge, culture, and history.

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