Library Services in Inclusive Environment: Role of Marketing Tools

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INTRODUCTION

In modern era, it is world widely accepted that in a modern society the position of a Library is indispensable and we cannot think of a cultured society, community and a developed country without a systematically developed and organized library and its services. Thus, a library has not become a part and parcel of intellectuals, elites, researchers, scholars, teachers, institutions of learning, cultural organizations but also is equally important for those who need library services in the inclusive environment so that the libraries do educate the people with special needs in the inclusive environment. In fact, two major hurdles which come in the way of users carry disabilities in accessing information resources of the library are:

- Lack of awareness of the information resources,
- Lack of skills to utilize the information resources the library has acquired for them.

The answer to their problems are the library services in the inclusive environment and adoption of marketing tools in promoting the specialized library information resources and services maintained by the libraries for the disabled users. In fact, in the present ICT environment, it is possible for rendering library services in the inclusive environment to serve the requirements of the readers having disabilities with the help of technology especially through designing and developing need oriented material for them and also by bring the information resources of the library to their notice using marketing tools.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education is a process where education system is built in a way to reach out all learners, without expecting them to fit in preexisting environment. It involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in our academic institutions to meet the diversified needs of all students. Thus inclusive education means

ABSTRACT

Inclusive Education involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in our academic institutions to meet the diversified needs of all students. Thus inclusive education means that all students, regardless of their ability level, are included in mainstream classroom. The students with disabilities are much more dependent on the library services as compared to the normal students. Thus, it is imperative that the library information resources and ICT gazettes available in the library for them be taken at the door step of them. In order to provide effective and efficient library services to them application of marketing tools in promotion of the library products and services are must. The present article deals with the concept of Inclusive Environment, Inclusive Education, and tools to be used for the promotion of LIS products and services.

Key Terms: Inclusive Environment, Inclusive Education, Marketing tools, Library Services
that all students, regardless of their ability level, are included in mainstream classroom. Here teachers are expected to adjust their curriculum and teaching methodologies so that all students are benefitted. Same is applicable on Libraries. Libraries should be so designed, and should offer services to all students including disabled to meet their educational needs and should promote the information resources using promotional mechanism. The Government of India since its inception started giving importance to this area and thus, the country has seen lot of programmes and activities launched at different levels by different institutions. A few noteworthy efforts were made by the following organizations:

- Kothari Commission (1964),
- IEDC Scheme (The Integrated Education of Disabled Children Scheme, 1974),
- NPE (National Policy on Education, 1986),
- PWD Act (Persons with Disabilities Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Act, 1995, SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, 2002),
- Right to Education Act, 2009 (RTE), IEDSS (Inclusive Education of the Disabled at the Secondary Stage, 2008), and

**Inclusive Library**

One of the biggest problems of the disabled users in India in context of library use is the problem to access the information. An inclusive library is different from other types of libraries in terms of its patrons and its community. An inclusive library provides facilities to everyone to participate in its programs and get the maximum benefit of the services being rendered to them. In other words, an inclusive library intends to remove physical and attitudinal barriers that prevent patrons having disabilities from using the library, thus, it welcomes their participating in all library programs and services so that they are the beneficiaries of the library facilities to the maximum extent possible. One of the major objectives of the inclusive library is to maintain the dignity and privacy of all users and encourages their independence and promotes the rights of all people to be able to access the information required to build personal knowledge. Building an inclusive library involves both the physical requirements as well as information resources within their library. Since, an inclusive library involves getting to know the users in a detailed manner way, the library intends to provide full access to their range of services and facilities to its entire user as per their requirement, thereby making its services more user oriented and meaningful.

- **Types of Disabilities and Its Implications**

Disability comes in various shapes and sizes. As per census 2011, eight types of disabilities are recognized. Keeping in view each, following suggestive measures can be adopted to make library inclusive for all. These physical and policy changes enhance the usage of library resources and empower differently abled with education.

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<tr>
<th>Type of Disability</th>
<th>Environmental Modifications</th>
<th>Library Services, Resource Enhancement and policy changes</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Seeing/Visual Impairment</td>
<td><strong>Barrier free library structure.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>For multistory library building, provision of lift with sound systems.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Braille signage</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Signage in large font for low vision user.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proper lighting in library.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Library must have large print books, Braille books/magazines/newspapers, audio books.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Text to speech softwares like JAWS, KURZWEIL, NVDA, etc.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Magnifiers, Scanners and cameras for low vision user.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Head phone for text to speech softwares.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Other assistive devices like abacus mathematical tools and geometry box, DAISY readers, storage device for recordings, laptops installed with assistive softwares must be provided.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Narrative reproduction or Braille embossing of print books.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Symbols to locate different section of the library.</strong></td>
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<td>In Hearing/Hearing Impairment</td>
<td><strong>Text captioning system in elevators for hearing impaired.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Large signage.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Provide hearing aids like FM system, adopt OCR system.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Collection must include captioned videos.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Provision of paper and pens available to assist with communication.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Symbols and pictures to help users find their way around.</strong></td>
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<td>In Speech</td>
<td><strong>Voice recognition technology for easier access.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Alternative modes of communications like e-mail, fax, text phones and paper/pencil must be provided.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Display shelves for new arrivals with their front coversvisible.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Pictorial guide to the library must be available at front/help desk.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Basic training to library staff in sign language will be more beneficial.</strong></td>
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<td>In Movement/Locomotory Disability</td>
<td><strong>Architectural change to doors, elevators, washrooms, etc as per the need of the user.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Automatic door buttons for easier access.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Building wider corridor.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lowering of locker shelves, hooks etc.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Specialized computers with alternative keyboards, mouse and speech controls, and other devices to operate computer.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Collection of printed material as well as CDs, videos and DVDs should be at suitable height accessible to all including people in wheelchair.</strong></td>
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<td>Mental Retardation</td>
<td><strong>This category involves intellectual impairment with low level reading and writing abilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Collections should contain materials with high interest and low vocabulary requirements.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Avoid using web pages with graphic features that flash as this could adversely affect users with seizure disorders.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assistive technology to support reading and learning.</strong></td>
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<td>Mental Illness</td>
<td><strong>Here users face difficulty in understanding and retaining the information</strong></td>
<td><strong>Since conventional books are cognitively inaccessible. Study material should be designed keeping in view the users with learning disability.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Lessons plans should be interactive and engaging.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Training to library staff to know their user and their learning needs.</strong></td>
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Besides above few suggestive measure to make an academic institution and its library more inclusive are:

- Free downloading of time tables and syllabus.
- Allowing lectures to be audio tape.
- Providing personal laptop for the entire course of study in an institution with supporting software.
- Assistance in using the library holdings.
- Creating a safe library space.
- Personalize ‘Pal service which provides students to advise and assist with library usage throughout their studies and research.
- Free and affordable Apps for library resource usage.
- Braille tactile and signage's especially in library.
- Social change by encouraging disability awareness education for both the student and staff.
- Flexible membership and borrowing facilities from library which includes extended loan periods and loan limits on library resources.
- Extra time to get into classrooms/ writing paper/ facility of reader and writer.
- Organizing programs involving disabled students in cultural and sports activities, work shop, placement assistance etc.
- Suggestion from this group before planning renovation or expansion in an academic institute.
- Training to library staff to provide effective library services to all.
- Clarity and patience on the part of library staff dealing with differently abled users.
- We should emphasize in making them self-reliant.

**Publicity of Library Services**

It has been usually found that use of the library and library services is significantly lower among the disabled due to the lack of awareness. Library is inclusive only if its resources are accessible to all and fully utilized. These services are meaningless if they are not publicized to the user for whom it is meant for. Thus to promote library resources and services to its end users, extensive publicity of its products is required. It involves basically three elements:

- Assessing user needs
- Customizing library products and services, and
- Marketing activities

### Marketing Tools for Building Inclusive Library

The Chartered Institute of Marketing, UK defines marketing as "the management process which is responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customer requirements profitably". Kotler says that marketing is "an act of analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully-formulated programmes designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives." Following characteristics are driven from the explanation of the above two definitions of marketing management:

- Marketing is a management process and act to do analysis, planning, implementation and control.
- Marketing intends to take care of formulated programmes carefully not randomly in order to achieve desired responses.
- Marketing seeks to bring about voluntary exchange and does not seek to be all things to all people.
- Marketing intends to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization.
- Marketing places emphasis on consumer’s needs and desire rather than on the producer’s preferences.

In order to bring all information resources and services available in the library at the door step of the users with disabilities, following important promotion tools need to be used:

- **Communication**
  Rowley divides communication channels into personal and non-personal communication channels. Word of mouth is the primary means of communication which does not involves money to be spent in communication and promotion of products and services. However, other media such as e-mail TV, radio, posters, newspapers, etc. need money for the promotion of products and services.

- **Atmospherics**
  This term is coined by Kotler who defines atmospherics as "the designing of buying and consuming environments in a manner calculated to produce specific cognitive and/or emotional effects on the target market." It is undisputedly accepted that working environment, library ambience, appearance of employees, the physical setting, lighting, work environment, and noise levels etc. are imperative for creating a healthy reading environment in a library. Thus, these must be healthy and suitable to make a positive impact on users. It is observed largely that the libraries do not give much attention on Atmospheric considerations result into the adverse environment in the library. Since, it does not cost much in adopting, implementing and maintaining atmospherics,
it is always better to properly design to create relevant space in the library, place relevant guides to use the library, etc. This may help in inviting attention of users to make use of library facilities more joyfully.

- **Advertising**

Advertising is an important tool for promoting library services. Newspapers, scholarly journals, magazines, newsletters, radio, television, Web, etc. can be used by the library to advertise its products and services. As advertisements help in image-building, they must be used by the library though the message ought to be communicated to the user community need to be very short and precise. Similarly, Librarians or library professionals may come on local radio and TV, highlighting the new role the libraries plays in the present era. Likewise there are a variety of ways of advertising online. Traditional print advertisements include brochures, pamphlets, newspaper advertisements, etc.

- **Brochure**

Brochure has its own role as a promotional tool and thus, is very useful in promoting the LIS products and services. It is therefore, suggested that the design and presentation of brochures and leaflets should be prepared nicely, presentable and attractive. It is also desirable that the language should be simple to hold the interest of the user.

- **Leaflets**

Leaflets can be used as guides to the library and its special collections, They can be kept in the library at a location which is placed so that anyone who enters the library is attracted to that corner.

- **Posters**

Posters are considered good way of visual communication. They can draw attention when displayed at prominent locations and provide brief information about an event, service, etc. However, the posters which has lost their significance and value should be replaced on a regular basis.

- **Newsletters**

Newsletters can be used by the library to convey information about new acquisitions, new services, events and activities, fee changes, etc. Information regarding library can be included to convey a message to readers about the alertness of the library in updating and communicating small but important pieces of information. In fact, they are an excellent marketing tool because they list all the activities of a library. With ICT facilities in the library, an e-newsletter can be produced. The text of the newsletter can also be included on the library website.

- **Extension activities**

Book displays, lectures, quiz, debates, seminars, competitions, exhibitions, etc are the extension activities which can be used for the purpose of promotion of LIS Products and services and they do have positive impact on the image of the library and can motivate people to come to the library.

- **Library Tour**

Library tour need to be organized for new and existing members to promote the library services. While on a library tour, users can be prompted to ask questions and find out more about new activities, products, and services.

- **Library Month/Day**

Organizing national library day/month can be an effective way to promote the library. A library can create awareness of its importance in society.

- **Websites**

In an ICT environment, the users are very familiar in using the ICT tools and gazettes. Thus, a library can advertise its products and services using library website. The websites contain details about the library, including the collection, subscriptions, service policy, terms and conditions, etc. It may also have graphics and multimedia advertising that can have an impact on visitors. The library website should be continuously updated to avoid an adverse effect the image of the library. The website can also be interactive so users can communicate with staff. For this purpose, a directory of staff members should be posted on the website.  

- **Electronic Mail-Mailshots**

According to Natarajan e-mail is the most universal application on the Internet and it can be used for direct communication with potential users. There are many benefits to using email as a promotional tool. Mail shots are an effective medium that create personalized services, with information about library activities and events, membership renewal.

- **Bulletin Board**

This is an offshoot of email and is a many-to-many email system. It is medium for messages of interest to a community of online users. This service can be used by libraries for disseminating information to online users.

- **Newsgroups**

Libraries can use newsgroups or discussion groups to build awareness among its clientele. A message (an article) is posted to the entire newsgroup. Other interested persons can reply/comment on the message. The topic can range widely, but each group is confined to one subject.

- **E-commerce**

A library can also sell its products online through online charging and credit facilities. E-commerce has redefined the way business is conducted. Well-known bookstores around the world are offering their holdings over the Internet. For example, Blackwell maintains a database of more than 1.5 lakhs active titles. Benefits of e-commerce include:

- A very large customer base and that reaches many different countries,
- Maintaining a website is relatively cheap, and results in reduced prices,
- More competition, current information, quick access and sales, and
- Caters to the customers’ wide and varied interests, saving travel time

- **Blogs**

Blogs are continuously-updated websites, created by individuals or organizations. They are generally free. A library can use blogs
to promote its products and services by making it appealing and informative. Special alerts about new resources special services can be included in the blog entries. To get feedback, comments and suggestions can be invited from visitors.

CONCLUSION

The importance of teaching, learning, research and other academic activities by differently abled person is very important today and has become integral part of the national development. There are ICT tools, assistive devices, specialized library products and services to overcome the educational barriers from the life of disabled but the problem lies in the part of systematic implementation, less utilization of learning resources due to lack of awareness among the end user. Need is to empower the disabled through ICTs, assistive devices need to be cost effective, user friendly, durable and available. This is possible only by marketing of library resources and services. Thus the need of an hour is not only providing the inclusive library services but also to develop public relations with its users by promoting the library. This together can empower those who are excluded today.

REFERENCES