

Significance of Library Orientation Program in Academic Libraries

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Abstract

This paper aims to provide an overview of Library Orientation Program for better utilization of library resources and services. This paper explains-various methods, applicability of Assistive Technology, use of Ishikawa diagram to analyze the bottle necks, impact of library anxiety, role of librarian on the voyage of knowledge extraction from the ocean of knowledge.

Keywords: Assistive Technology, Ishikawa Diagram, Library Anxiety

1. Introduction

With the passage of time technologies have been developed, which has undergone massive changes in all walks of life including the field of Library and Information Science. Many changes have taken place in libraries - documents are available in electronic formats besides printed documents, card catalogue has been replaced by Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), use of application software packages has made the process of information storage and retrieval more easy, economic and time saving. Number of students is increasing steadily unlike library staff. A critical situation will arise if hundreds of students approach daily to library staff members for their numerous queries. To manage such situation, librarians should make provision to educate library users about available tools and techniques of libraries so that users can use library efficiently and independently.

2. Library Orientation Program

Library users are getting acquainted with library resources and services by attending Library Orientation Programme. Many Library and

Information Centres are spending huge money towards development of their resources. Library is not at all a show case of embedded knowledge. It is of no use if users are unable to handle such intellectual resources. Books are silent tangible products. They cannot speak about their contents and qualities. It is the duty of Librarians to make right contact with right user at right time. Hence Library Orientation Program is very essential from user's point of view so that they can avail library resources and services for the purpose of their study. Novice users become information literate and they will retrieve relevant information pin pointedly, expeditiously and exhaustively.

3. Objectives

Library Orientation Program is very essential for library users. It enables library users - to use library resources and services independently and efficiently for the purpose of their study thereby transforming them to be lifelong learners.

4. Different Methods

A library having very comprehensive collection of information resources may not effectively used by its library users without having proper guidance. Librarians should come forward and should take vital



role for providing user education. Library Orientation Program is a part of User Education. Various methods are there to educate users towards library related activities. Some of those methods are as follows -

4.1 Lecture method

It is a traditional and very common method where librarians deliver lectures to the novice users who clear their doubts through direct question answering session.

4.2 Library tour

A Librarian many often accompany library visitors to show physically different sections of his or her library on walk. It enables library users to grasp valuable information regarding library.

4.3 Presentation method

Power point presentation is an effective method. This can be made more interesting with online demonstration method. Still images, video clips may be incorporated to make the presentation more acceptable.

4.4 Streaming Technique

This technology is found to be used to play audio and video files. In fact a small buffer is created on computer very quickly and files begin to play almost at the real time unlike downloading. Library Orientation Program may also be carried out using streaming technology by floating library related video or audio files in to the website of library. Users can have the liberty to access information from their laptops or desktops at their leisure hours.

4.5 Virtual Library Tour

This provides basic information regarding library material and services which is available 24x7 basis via Web.

4.6 Broachers

Many libraries are distributing broachers to the new users or library visitors in order to give some ideas in a nutshell about their libraries. Information content of the broachers is to be updated time to time. This may be pamphlet or booklet.

4.7 Library Open House

Many libraries are conducting Open House Program for the purpose of showcasing their collections, services, facilities, library lay out etc to new students or students of different schools or colleges.

4.8 Internship Program for Library Trainees

Some libraries are offering internship program for library trainees, consequently those persons are getting adequate exposures to handle housekeeping operations of different section like – Acquisition, Technical Processing, Circulation, Periodical, Digital Library etc.

5. Who are the Target users?

Librarian should be careful enough to focus his or her concentration on the matter - for whom Library Orientation Programme is to be rendered. Is it for school children, college students, faculty members or for others? School students are to be explained in a simple way. Complexity may be raised with the raise the standards of users. Specially-abled library users cannot extract valuable information resources from existing library resources. In order to overcome this situation specialized software, hardware and devices are needed which are collectively known as Assistive Technology or Adaptive Technology (AT). Depending on the need of the target users librarians should procure suitable AT products for their libraries. Screen reading software, Screen magnification software, Braille software, Assistive listening device are commonly used products used

in libraries. Library staff should explain the users regarding the technique of using those sophisticated software. Users should know the meaning of symbols like - Access to low vision, Wheel chair accessible, Assistive listening systems, Braille, Closed captioning, Sign language interpretation, Accessible lift, Accessible parking, Accessible toilet etc. Some seats are made reserved nowadays for the Specially abled students in various courses at postgraduate and undergraduate levels. So number of such students is increasing day by day. Librarians are to take special care to provide equitable service for those specially-abled students using Assistive or Adaptive Technology. Many Specially abled library users cannot make use of information from websites unless it is made accessible. Web content should be made accessible to all types of users. For example –

- 5.1. Users having blindness can access web pages through screen reading feature.
- 5.2. User with low vision may take the help of screen magnification facility.
- 5.3. Users having colour blindness can easily access information if there is provision to change the background colour using style sheet.
- 5.4. Incorporation of captioning facility is highly useful for them who have hearing disability.
- 5.5. Incorporation of speech recognition technology will enable the users with physical disabilities to navigate the web content.

6. Learning Outcome

Undergoing Library Orientation Program, users will grasp many things relating to library. Some of those are -

- 6.1. How to use library
- 6.2. What are the rules and regulations
- 6.3. Services offered by library
- 6.4. Available library resources
- 6.5. Basics of database searching skill
- 6.6. Whom to be contacted
- 6.7. How to extract desired information using different reference tools
- 6.8. How to carry out OPAC search
- 6.9. How to find out books from racks
- 6.10. How to issue books using RFID Technology.
- 6.11. How to handle Kindle E-book reader
- 6.12. How to use anti-plagiarism software
- 6.13. Many other issues like - Predatory journals, Impact factors, H-index, Institutional Digital Repository (IDR), Library services through Mobile Apps, Web scale discovery service.

Resource utilization is expected to increase if Library Orientation Program be organized effectively. Fringe users will be transformed gradually to potential users.

7. Cause-And-Effect Diagram

Cause-And-Effect Diagram was developed by Prof. Kaoru Ishikawa. He was a Japanese organizational theorist. This diagram is also known as Fishbone diagram or Ishikawa diagram. A Cause-And-Effect diagram is extremely useful to identify the root causes of a problem. The basic layout of the diagram has been shown below in fig. 1.

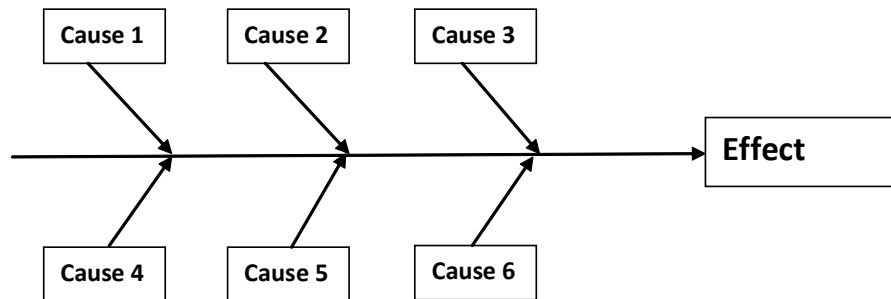


Fig.1: The basic layout of Cause-And-Effect Diagram.

Attending the Library Oriented Programming, students can efficiently handle information resources resulting into increase in knowledge level. Interest for study with library resources will increase their depth of knowledge and also their academic output. Academic output may be reduced due to some negative impacts. This may be explained with the help of Ishikawa diagram (Fig.2)

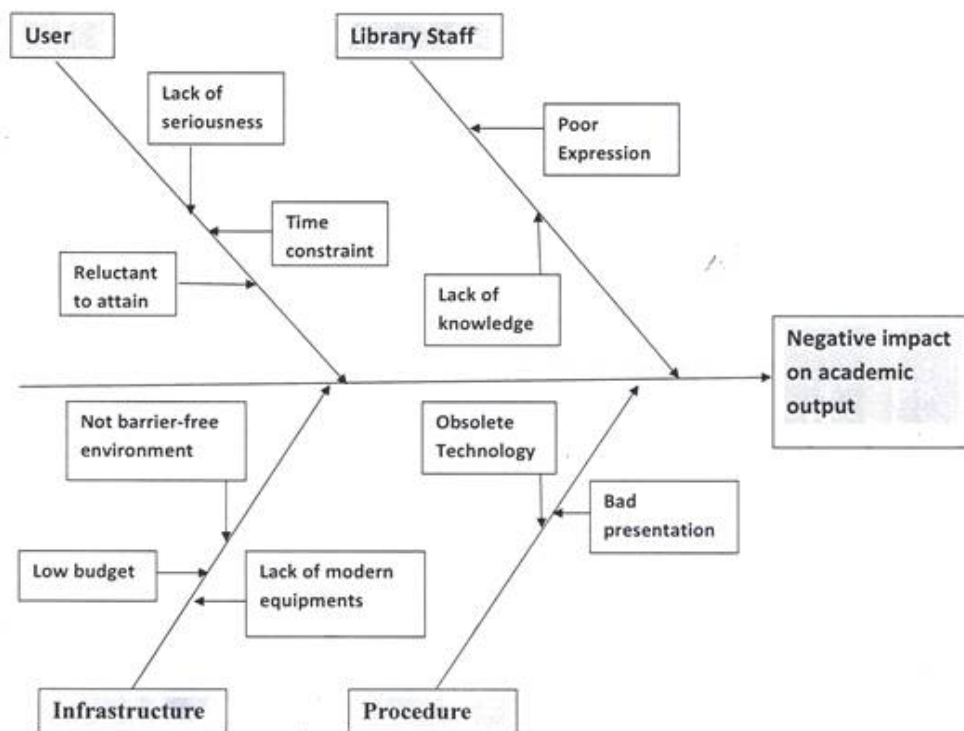


Fig. 2: Ishikawa diagram on negative impact on academic output

Some users may not attain Library Orientation Programme due to lack of interest, shortage of time. Users will not be satisfied at all if library staff members fail to explain everything in interesting manner. Library having budgetary crunch cannot make provision for enormous resources as a result of which students will be unable to fulfill their unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Presentation cannot be good using obsolete technology. Presentation will be bad if there is disturbance in Pi system. A library is considered as an ideal place for studying. However a chaotic situation will arise for a library having large number of students and inadequate floor space. It is almost impossible for specially abled library users to access information without using Assistive Technology. All these causes are responsible for negative impacts on academic output.

8. Analysis from Scopus database: Searching Scopus database with keywords - “Library Orientation Program”, only 14 articles were published (during 2001-2019). No publication was found after 2014. This output is very low. Library professionals should focus more on this topic in order to submit their papers on renowned journals. Consequently the knowledge of readers (library professionals) towards educating the library users

will be increased. If the library professionals apply useful techniques obtained from (Scopus database) towards educating their users, the utilization of library resources and services will be increased manifold.

Table 1: Articles on Library Orientation Program obtained from Scopus database

Sl. No.	Year	No. of articles
1	2001	2
2	2002	1
3	2003	3
4	2004	1
5	2005	2
6	2010	2
7	2011	2
8	2014	1
	Total	14

The diagrammatic representation of data from the above table has been shown below.

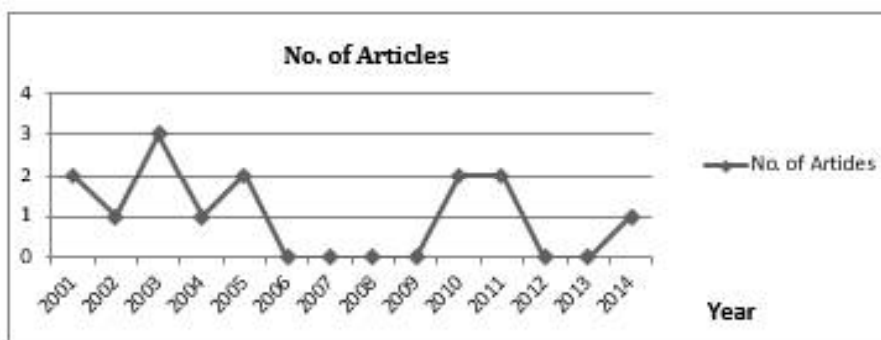


Diagram 1: Line graph of articles on Library Orientation Program

9. Library anxiety

Library anxiety is the fear of library users regarding their libraries. It occurs due to following reasons –

- 9.1. Hesitation due to shyness to approach to Librarian or Library staff members.
- 9.2. Communication problem of users
- 9.3. Lack of knowledge regarding how to extract desired information from plethora of information located within library.
- 9.4. Lack of computer proficiency, Uncomfortable feelings due to Library anxiety gives rise to psychological barriers towards academic success. The feeling of anxiousness of library users may be diminished if they either sincerely attain Library Orientation Program or contact time to time with library staff members to clear the doubts.

10. Case of Central Library, IIT Kharagpur

The Central Library, IIT Kharagpur is conducting Library Programme in two shifts from 4.00 PM to 5.00 PM and 5.00 to 6.00 PM at the beginning of each academic session. Students are allowed to ask questions. Majority of the respondents are under graduate students. Notice is displayed in Library notice board and the same information is floated into the web site of the Central Library. However intimation is also sent separately to each hall of residence of the students. The attendance of male candidates is more compared to the female candidates. Total user base of the students is more than 12,000 comprised of UG, PG and research scholars. But the number of library staff is very negligible. It is not possible to handle such huge mass by handful library staff. Hence the event is

very essential. The total floor area of the Central Library, IIT Kharagpur is 8000 Sq. Mt. Respondents get opportunity regarding the location of the valuable treasures and also services offered by the library staff. Power point presentation as well as online demo is shown to them. Library guide book is distributed to all the participants of the Library Orientation Program. Feedback is taken time to time from to improve the quality of the orientation program. This library has also prepared a virtual library tour (duration is 20 minutes) which is being displayed every day on four big LED screens located inside the Central Library. The Central Library, IIT Kharagpur conducted various program on several emerging topics for the benefit of the users. Some of those events are – Discovery service, Author workshop, Copyright. The library also conducted several Open House Programs to reveal the valuable treasures. Library users seems to be very happy the way library staff members are trying to bring awareness to library resources are services to the user community. This practice of the Central Library will surely increase the foot prints of the users within library premises in future.

11. Role of Librarians

Academic Librarians should take key interest to organize Library Orientation Program. Training schedule for Library Orientation Program should be widely circulated. Librarians should capable enough to understand the behavioral pattern of the users. On the basis of the need of the target users strategy is be designed efficiently. Librarians are to motivate the students. It would be very helpful if live demo be given to users using modern technological tools namely projectors, computers with Internet

connection etc. Librarians should regularly interact with students either individually or in group. Librarians should meticulously examine the status of Library Anxiety among their users. Librarians should discuss more about Library Orientation Program in various Conferences, Seminars etc. Budding library professionals should be encouraged to write more papers in national and international journals in the field of Library and Information Science. These attempts will surely increase user satisfaction at its optimum level.

12. Conclusion

Library Orientation Program is a very essential service with the help of which the academic activity of students may be improved to a great extent. Users will acquire clear cut ideas about do's and don'ts of that library system. Library Orientation Program should be conducted in such a manner that will be make user to understand a series of activities, such as – to find out question papers from digital archives, to extract library resources towards construction of mini or micro projects, checking with the help of anti-plagiarism software, searching and reading of E-books, E-journals, online database etc. Users Feedback is to be analyzed and modification of the process is to be carried out if required. Without the help of valuable instructions of Librarians; students would waste their valuable time. Library Orientation Program is highly useful to eliminated vague ideas of library users regarding library and library staff. The status of Library Anxiety among library users is to be examined carefully time to time. Librarians are to take key role to help users of varying interests in order to transform them to be lifelong learners.

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