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# Use of Effective techniques and Outreach programs for Optimum Utilization and Promotion of Library Resources and Services in College Libraries

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## Abstract

*College libraries always play a vibrant role in teaching-learning, research, and other college activities. Various challenges are faced by college libraries, including the development of technologies, ongoing budget cuts, and the changing demands of learning, teaching, and research. It also includes a vast increase in the number and forms of publications, prices of information sources which have increased rapidly daily, etc. There are drastic changes in how they create, use and maintain scholarly materials and have become providers of electronic resources and places where physical collections can be accessed and used. The methods and ways of storing, organizing, analysing, and retrieving information and information sources have also been affected due to constant changes in technologies. Therefore, the is an urgent need to use promotional approaches and use of outreach techniques that will ensure that scarce resources and services match customer needs for the most significant impact have been adopted in the libraries. Another way to cope up with the challenges is the re-engineering of college libraries. It is essential to develop the economy in library activities using different technologies and fulfil users' needs. It should be done by satisfying user needs, optimum utilization of resources acquired, and job satisfaction to staff or the college libraries to survive in a technologically advanced world and can be able to offer a "visible, identifiable and physical image." In this article, the researcher has discussed the various challenges faced by the college libraries, the different promotional approaches, and the use of outreach techniques, including re-engineering of libraries, which can be used to achieve the library's goal to provide better services to its users.*

## Introduction:

The college libraries are the heart of the educational institutions. College Libraries play a vital role in developing future citizens in today's globalization and information explosion world. They are regarded as the foundation of the "Nation Building." College ". Ideally, College Libraries are considered as a "Soul" of the institution. It plays a major role in the growth of higher education and the academic excellence of the institution. As there is advancement in technology, it has highly affected the forms and prices of publication, ways of storing, organizing, and retrieving information, and most importantly, information-seeking behaviour of users. To meet these challenges, the college libraries need to co-op with changing scenarios in librarianship. It will help the libraries achieve the institution's objectives and achieve maximum user's satisfaction.

College libraries have their clientele who nowadays are making less use of the facilities. This phenomenon has many reasons like changing lifestyle and values, increasing other mformation resources, recreational attractions, and options. College libraries are also lagging in various aspects. Library User has a perception and certain expectations about the

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college library.  The various aspects of the library, such as its collection, environment, staff, and services, are responsible for developing the library's image and user's interest in the library.  (Tikam, 2007)

Therefore, there is an urgent need to use promotional approaches and outreach techniques that will ensure that scarce resources and services match customer needs for the greatest impact have been adopted in the libraries.  (Rowley, 2004)  These methodical measures will increase the library's visibility, which will aid in promoting the libraries' worth to their parent institutions.. Another way to cope up with the challenges is the re-engineering of college libraries.  An academic library/college library needs to change its library services and L.I.S. Professionals have to use technological tools in their systems to upgrade library activities.  Radical changes are required to reshape the faces of college libraries in the I.C.T. era.  Day by day, user needs and their reading habits are changing due to the use of social media, the internet, and other technological tools.  Academic librarians have to take some initiative to avoid a gap between the expectations of the user and the library services.  (Sanap, 2019) And the target of optimum utilization of college libraries can be achieved, and the user will get the required right information at the right time, and college library resources and services will be utilized to their full extent.

**Literature Review:**

(2008, Enache) Information technologies change rapidly, as the topic is explored in Enache's book.  In libraries, information items and services are available in a variety of formats.  Libraries and information services must implement marketing techniques to help accomplish their mission, aims, and objectives in order to remain viable in the present context.  Marketing has traditionally been connected with the sale of a product for a profit, but in the 1960s, it was expanded to include the non-profit sector, including libraries.

(Enache, 2008) As the concept is discussed in the book written by Enache, Information technologies change rapidly.  Information products and services are in a multiplicity of formats in libraries.  For libraries and information services to stay viable in the current climate, they must adopt marketing strategies to help meet organizational mission, goals, and objectives.  Marketing has long been associated with the selling of a product in order to make a profit but was extended to the non-profit sector, including libraries, in the 1960s.

(Yi, 2016)This study  examined how Australian academic librarians perceive techniques used to promote their services and resources and the factors influencing their perceptions of the particular approaches used better to understand their attitudes and views towards these techniques.  Librarians may use the results to reflect on the effectiveness of these techniques, balance the weight of the factors' influences, and better understand various promotion techniques.  This will enable them to promote academic library services and resources more effectively in the future.  The study results provide a better understanding of academic librarians' attitudes and views towards techniques for promoting services and resources.  Librarians may use the results to reflect on these techniques' effectiveness, balance the weight of the factors' influences, and better understand various promotion techniques.  This will enable them to promote library services and resources more effectively in the future.

(Rowley, 2003) It is stated in the article written on "Information marketing: seven questions.  Library Manageament" Services are the intangible products that libraries now have to promote in order to compete with external competitors.  Libraries face numerous challenges such as restricted funding and increasing user expectations as they identify, develop, deliver and monitor service offerings that are superior to their competitors.  However, these challenges offer opportunities to provide better services for users by redefining customer relationships through the use of marketing strategies to build and strengthen ongoing relationships with customers

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(Polger and Okamoto, 2013)A more recent survey of academic librarians on using many of the approaches listed was conducted. However, the authors do not explain which promotion technique was effective and what factors influenced the techniques used. Further studies of international academic libraries found that users were not being updated regularly, despite the knowledge that improving awareness of library services and resources can lead to increased use.

**Challenges Faced by College Libraries:**

In the article written on "Future of Academic Libraries: Challenges and Opportunities," Dr. P. Venkataramana discussed the various challenges academic libraries face, which are also applicable to college libraries. Now the academic libraries are facing many challenges relating to I.C.T. and expectations. In the future, the academic libraries will have different challenges which have to face college libraries. (Venkataramana, 2011) has defined the future challenges of academic libraries are as follow:

- "Rapid technological innovations
- Declining library budgets
- The increasing cost of publications
- The continuing emergence of new media formats.
- The explosive growth and use of web resources
- Powerful and user-friendly high-quality search engines
- Accelerated Learning Scenario
- Intensive use of digital resources
- Increasing competition from the Internet, Online book stores, search technology, and commercial publishers of information
- Changing users' information-seeking behavior and habits
- The exponential growth of open access scholarly resources on the web
- Interactive virtual exponential environment."

The academic libraries /College libraries have to face the above complex challenges, among them some of the challenges facing today by L.I.S. Professionals. (Venkataramana, 2011) The library should reach out to the customers instead of waiting to deal with these challenges. For this, promotion is required. The use of new technologies for efficient and effective library services is necessary to save the time of users. The ever-growing library demands the continuing relationship between the library and its users.

**Promotional Approaches Using Various Promotional Techniques, Outreach Programmes, And Re-Engineering:**

To deal with the challenges faced by college libraries mentioned above, they should use various promotional techniques and outreach programmes and also implement the concept of re-engineering.

**Re-engineering of Libraries:**

Re-engineering in the library means going to the root of the constitution of the library, its goals, and mission, beginning with the clean slate and redesigning the library processes in response to new technology, ever-growing information, and constantly changing needs of the user. Re-engineering leads to the improvements in the college libraries, which results in quantum leaps in performance, achieving breakthroughs which can be measured in getting maximum user satisfaction, maximum utilization of available resources, at reduced costs, increased speed and accuracy depending upon the requirement of the college library. These challenges can also be met by using the concept of re-engineering

college libraries by satisfying user needs, optimum utilization of resources acquired, and job satisfaction to staff. Re-engineering is the only way out for college libraries to survive in a technologically advanced world.  It can be able to offer a "visible, identifiable and physical image" for the institution.  It helps libraries to perform the same functions using different methods and technologies and provide better services to the users.  Now the college libraries have different roles to play.  The functions of the libraries need to be changed by using management tools and technologies to provide adequate library collection and services in limited resources.

(Desai, 2017)

**Outreach Techniques:**

As discussed by S. Ravi, Outreach is often used interchangeably with synonyms such as extension and the phrases "service to the disadvantaged" or "unsaved, "and "community "or "inner-city service." As a tool to help expand access to information services, practices, or products, outreach are most often designed to accomplish directly deliver information services; educate or inform the target population, increasing their knowledge and skills; educate or inform people who interact with the target population; establish beneficial connections between people and organizations.

(Ravi, 2019)

The word "outreach" describes a wide range of activities, from the actual delivery of services to disseminating information.(Boyce & Boyce, 1995), point out that while the term outreach is used extensively in library literature from the mid-sixties, a specific definition is not readily offered.

The A.L.A. Glossary of Library and Information Science definition for "outreach program" is a library public service program initiated and designed to meet the information needs of an unserved or inadequately served target groups, such as the institutionalized, senior citizens, or nonusers.  Such programs may emphasize an aggressive publicity effort or extended services to the target group.(A.L.A. Glossary of Library and Information Science, 1983)

Outreach goes hand in hand with library marketing, promotions, public relations, special events, social responsibility, user education, academic collaboration, etc.

**Concept of Outreach Methods:**

The outreach method among library and information science professionals is based on four outreach concepts: Print, Non-print, Technology, and Social
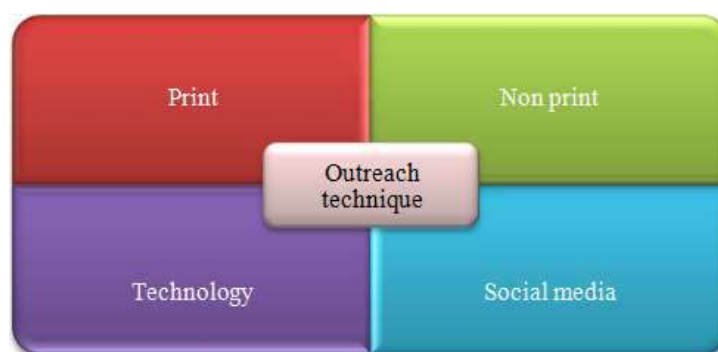
media.  The same is shown below



**Figure 1 Outreach Method (Ravi, 2019)**

| Sr. No. | Outreach Method | Variables |
|---------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 | Print | Advertisements<br>Announcements<br>Booklets<br>Brochures<br>Catalogues<br>Leaflets<br>Library tours<br>Newsletters<br>Published guides |
| 2 | Non-print | Advertising<br>Classroom<br>Displays<br>Exhibits or<br>Giveaways<br>Instruction<br>Print advertising<br>Training sessions<br>Workshops |
| 3 | Technology | Direct mail<br>E-mails<br>Events<br>Face-to-face<br>Library Website<br>Online<br>Phone<br>Website |
| 4 | Social Media | SMS service<br>Ask@librarian<br>Library blog<br>Twitter<br>Flickr<br>My space<br>Wikis<br>You tube<br>Apps<br>LinkedIn<br>Instagram |

**Table 1: Components and Variables (Ravi, 2019)**

**Outreach Methods Components:**

Outreach in libraries is not a newly built concept. However, it extends roots to more than 40 years. S Ravi conducted the study on the concept of outreach method adopted by library and information science professionals working in 76 engineering institutions of eight districts was studied based on four outreach concepts as Print, Non-print, Technology, and Social media. It is a library public service program initiated and designed to meet the information needs of unserved or inadequately served target groups, such as the institutionalized, senior citizens, or nonusers.

These Outreach Methods are classified into four components:

**Print:**

The views on the outreach print method have been analyzed based on nine variables such as advertisements, announcements, Booklets, Brochures, Catalogues, Leaflets, Library tours, Newsletters, and Published guides.

The first preference was given for "Published Guides." It is followed by "Advertisement" and "Booklets." The least preference was indicated to "Brochures" and "Library tours."

**Non-print Method:**

The views on outreach non-print method have been analysed based on nine variables as Advertising, Classroom, Displays, Exhibits,

Giveaways, instruction, Print advertising, Training sessions, and Workshops in a five-point scale such as Not at all; ineffective; No Opinion; Somewhat practical and Effective

**Technology Method:**

The views on the outreach Technology method has been analysed based on eight variables such as Direct mail, E-mails, events, Face-to-face, Library Website, Online, Phone, and Website in a five-point scale such as Not at all; ineffective; No Opinion; Somewhat practical and Effective.

**Social Media Method:**

The views on the outreach Social Media method has been analysed based on eleven variables such as SMS service, Ask@librarian, Library blog, Twitter, Flickr; My space, Wikis; YouTube; Apps; LinkedIn and Instagram in a five-point scale such as Not at all; ineffective; No Opinion; Somewhat practical and Effective.

The Librarian can select these above outreach techniques based on the situation. As the situation evolves, so should the techniques used. Librarians need to have a good understanding of client characteristics. The college libraries In general, this will give them a better idea of what techniques they would be more likely to use in a given situation. For instance, e-mail, online adverts, and phones could be best suited for promotion to students, library assistants, and academic staff. Therefore, they need to know the range of approaches, the approaches that are likely to be successful, approaches that best suit their libraries, and the factors influencing the techniques used. Their choices of effective techniques depend on their own decisions and situations. Reviewing the characteristics of the situation and their favored techniques will help librarians adjust promotion behaviors to meet the situation's needs. (Malekani & Benard, 2018) The College libraries generally have young students as primary users of the library.

This young generation is more familiar with new technology and the use of social media. Therefore, Librarian should consider the various factors before selecting the promotional suitable for his users.

**While providing such promotion techniques following points should be considered:**

- While promoting services and resources, librarians need to have a good understanding of user/client characteristics.
- The effective promotion techniques chosen depend on the situation.
- In general, this will give them a better idea of what techniques they would be more likely to use in a given situation.
- users of the college library should be given various user orientation and training to use the above techniques appropriately
- This knowledge will enable them to get acquainted with new technologies, methods, use of social media used in various promotion techniques.

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- To attract users, generate nonuser awareness, and raise awareness.
- of available services and resources, libraries need to find ways to promote services and resources to users as effectively as possible

The study conducted by Ravi states that various techniques used to promote library services and resources and the library marketing literature by examining in great depth the effectiveness of promotional tools used and the factors influencing the effective promotion techniques used. It has practical implications for effectively promoting future services and resources and contributes to future researchers wanting to explore library promotional techniques. The study conducted by Ravi showed that outreach methods were used by the Library and Information Science professionals in promoting the library information sources and services. The popular outreach methods such as Print, Non-print, technology, and social media for promoting the Library and Information Sources and Services are increasing day by day. Great outreach techniques are the way to maximize library services that need hard work, dedication, and conscientious efforts. The study revealed that there exist cognizable strengths and weaknesses in using Library and Information Services. ( Ravi, 2019).

**Conclusion:**

Especially college librarians face various challenges and obstacles such as dwindling budgets, poor staffing, and expanding student enrolment without library expansion, and so on. Librarians play a crucial role in effectively promoting services and resources to meet challenges, overcome obstacles, and win over competitors. As such, the role of college librarians is crucial to ensure this happens. It requires a better understanding of librarians' perceptions in using various effective promotional and outreach techniques. Librarians use a variety of practical techniques to promote services and resources. Great outreach techniques are the way to maximize library services that need hard work, dedication, and conscientious

efforts. While promoting services and resources, librarians need to understand their own demographic characteristics and human capital. In general, this will give them a better idea of what techniques they would be more likely to use in a given situation. The inclusion of innovative ideas and the traditional housekeeping services in the library has been inevitable since the advent of technologies and the need to reach a larger types and number of users to serve. The academic environment motivates the library and related users to participate in an outreach program to include the rest of the population. Librarians must become change agents and assume a proactive role in making effective use of all the technologies and their capabilities in a digital environment.

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