Extension Services in Public Library

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“Apart from such methods of pure publicity, libraries are now a days developing certain new types of work which, in addition to their being directly educative or recreational, lead also to publicity as an important secondary product.” These activities are named as the extension services of libraries.

Krishan Kumar,

“An extension service aims at converting non-readers in to readers. It creates and stimulates the desire for good reading. This is done by bringing books and readers together. This results in exploitation and promotion of collections.”

Mc Colvin considers it as means “to increase the number of readers and the volumes of work and later to make the library more useful to more people”.

ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science 1983 defines it as “the provision by a library of materials and services (including advisory services) to individuals and organizations outside its regular service area, especially to an area in which library service is not otherwise available.

1. Objectives: The main objectives in providing extension services are

i) To convert a library into a social, cultural and intellectual centre;
ii) To convert non reader into reader, non user to user.
iii) To bring books and readers together.
iv) To inform those who do not use the library services and to attract them to those services.
v) To inform the reader of all the facilities offered by the library.
vi) To remind both the reader and the non reader of the library and its resources.
vii) As a means of publicity to enlist financial support or otherwise for the libraries.

2. Prerequisites for Extension Services

i) The library should have a good collection to support all extension activities.
ii) The trained and experienced staff is obligatory.
iii) The library should have a lecture hall, an exhibition hall for holding meeting of different groups.
iv) The library should possess audio-video equipment i.e. LCD projector, slide projector and mike arrangement.
v) The librarian should be a good organizer, should understand the needs of the different categories of the community and be knowledgeable about the collection of the library.

3. Forms of Extension Services:

The Library extension services may be of internal or external type. The internal extension service includes orientation programmes and the external extension service includes the mobile library service, publicity programmes etc. Some of the main forms of extension services are as follows

1. **Library Orientation / Library Tour:**

Many potential library patrons do not know how to use a library effectively. This can be due to the lack of early exposure, shyness, or anxiety and fear of displaying ignorance. These problems led to the emergence of the library instruction movement, which advocated library user education. Libraries inform the public of
what materials are available in their collections and how to access that information. The reference staff may orient the user either in formal way or informally into the library system.

2. **Translation Of Manuscript/ Local Language:**

For increase use of the library public library should translate books or manuscripts in to local language. It helps to attract more people towards library because books written in local or mother tongue are more demanded in public library.

3. **Reading Circle, Study Circle:**

Persons with common interest may be brought together by the public library to a reading circle. Each reading circle should be given necessary facilities regarding the materials and a suitable place to hold the meeting, so they can discuss on various topics and exchange their ideas.

4. **Forming Friends of the Library Group:**

The public Library can also think of forming “Friends of the Library Group”; such group can assist the library through fund raising, volunteering, and advocacy. They also hold book sales at the library. With the help of such group library can raise funds and can do library marketing also.

5. **Reading to Illiterates:**

Reading hours for adults who cannot read should be arranged by public libraries. Once they become neo-literates the public library then should take upon itself to see to it that they do not lapse into illiteracy again.

6. **Meeting, Public Lectures and Talks:**

A public library should organize public lectures and talks by eminent persons and also by library staff. With the help of such lectures many new users can attract towards library and old users can gain more and new knowledge.
7. **Celebration of Festival and Events and Arranging Cultural Programmes:**

It is a good idea to arrange popular festivals and events in the public library which may also arrange a drama, a puppet show, a music concert, a film show, a magic show etc. Such cultural programmes can prove great attraction for the community or can celebrate various birth anniversaries of eminent people such as Gandhi Jayanti, S.R. Ranganathan’s jayanti, shiv jayanti etc. On such occasions a book exhibition related to the programme should be arranged.

8. **Book Fair and Exhibition:**

At the time of talk, festival, fair, drama, etc. a book exhibition on the relevant topic may be arranged. Exhibition on local history, local festivals, art, photograph and painting can offer great opportunity to attract the attention of the community. Periodical exhibition of books which have a bearing on topical theme enhances the chances of books finding their readers. Occasional exhibitions of unused books might prove useful for the reader in getting interested in books and using them.

9. **Mobile Service:**

Public library can introduce mobile library services to citizens of remotely located places who do not have access to public libraries. Public library can deliver books to them through various methods. For offering this service, the time for each locality is to be fixed and notified earlier.

10. **Publicity/ Propaganda:**

Advertisement about public library and services provided by the library should be done through the newspaper, radio, television etc. It helps to increase the use and user of public library.

11. **Publication:**

Public library can publish publications like annual report, reading guide, library magazine / bulletin and other similar publications. It is also a marketing tool to increase use of library.
I. **Library Bulletin**: The library bulletin should not only list fresh books and some important articles published in current issues of journals but should also give brief annotations wherever the content of new material needs. The library bulletin can take the form of indexing or abstracting service or table of content of periodicals received in the library or the list of recent publications or acquisition.

II. **Annual Report**: The annual report is the official document of the library for recording the annual library activities in totality. It is the statement of assessment and evaluation of all the departments of the library. It is the survey of works carried out during the preceding year with summarization of the activities and achievements of the library.

**Conclusion**: - In this way we can see how extension service helps to the public library. If it is used in effective way it helps to increase users of the library, also increases use of the available resources. It is one of the best tools of marketing about library and library services. It helps to maximize user satisfaction and to provide services to the remotely located people, who do not have facility of public library.

**References:**