

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES FOR THE USERS

L. No.	Title of the Lesson	Skills	Activity
12	Library and Information Services for the Users	ICT skills, Sorting and Organisation, Effective Communication, Problem Solving and Decision Making	Use of computers and related technologies, Databases and Information searching, Interacting with information sources in on internet

Summary

Library and reference services enable resources and activities provided by libraries to address information needs of users. Among various services, these include circulation services, reference services, online information services, inter library loans and information skills training.

These services are provided by trained and qualified professionals. They are experts at finding, selecting, circulating and organising information. These personnel, besides interpreting information needs of users, also navigate and analyse large amount of information and make available desired services for the user community.

Library services must be provided equally to all members of the community, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, professional or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those who are unable to use mainstream library services and materials.

The modern library is forced to serve the educational process - improving and providing a variety of new services. The accent in now-a-days information and reference work is pointed towards adopting new self-service based methods in the library servicing.

In this lesson, you will learn about reference and information services offered by different types of libraries and need and importance of these services.

Principal Points

- Libraries provide reference and information services to users to meet information requirements of the users.
- Reference service is concerned with direct personal assistance to the user seeking information.
- Information services are provided in anticipation of various needs of the users of libraries. These services are also provided on demand from the users.
- Basic or essential services offered by all types of libraries irrespective of the type or size are lending service, reservation of documents, inter-library lending, assistance in the use of library and library tools, reference service, readers' advisory service and library orientation.
- Growth in volume, diversity and complexity of information resources, advances in information and communication technology and change in information seeking behaviour of users have resulted in an increased demand for other information services including IT- based information services.
- Services offered under other desirable services are current awareness service, condensation type, literature search and compiling subject bibliographies, reprographic service, document delivery service, translation service, referral service, and Information Technology (IT) related services.



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Build your Understanding

1. In addition to printed material, many libraries are likely to stock a range of audios, e-books, braille materials and large print books. These are to offer services to special category of users.
2. Many libraries provide computers with Internet access, enabling users to browse the web in peaceful environment.
3. Plenty of users are not aware of the variety of services offered by their library. There should be proper marketing of library's various services.

What's



1. Libraries, in addition to providing materials also provide library and information services. These service are provided by trained library professionals.
2. As gateways to knowledge and culture, libraries play a fundamental role in society. The resources and services they offer create opportunities for learning, support literacy and education, and help shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative and innovative society.
3. Library services in modern libraries can be improved by automating most of the activities.



1. Libraries and information services provide essential gateways to the Internet. For some they offer convenience, guidance, and assistance, while for others they are the only available access points.
2. Libraries and information services also have a responsibility to serve all of the members of their communities, regardless of age, race, nationality, religion, culture, political affiliation, physical or other disabilities, gender or sexual orientation, or any other status.
3. Libraries and information services have a responsibility to facilitate and promote public access to quality information and communication. Users should be assisted with the necessary skills and a suitable environment in which to use their chosen information sources and services freely and confidently.

Extend your Horizon

1. Spend a full day in a public library and observe its activities in terms of services provided and types of users served. Write a brief report on the same.
2. Visit the website of NASSDOC, New Delhi. Go to the link on 'Facilities and services for the readers'. List the various available services.

Evaluate Yourself

1. Enumerate the basic or essential services provided by libraries.
2. List the IT related services which are provided by the modern libraries.
3. What are the four types of information needs of the users and the services available for the same ?
4. Give an account of other desirable services offered by libraries.