CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction
1.1 Need for the study
1.2 Statement of the study
1.3 Objectives of the study
1.4 Hypotheses
1.5 Methodology
1.6 Chapterisation
1.0 Introduction

For the past two decades, libraries all over the world have been riding on a stormy sea braving pressures of all kinds. On the one hand, there is a steady escalation in the cost of reading materials which is at the rate of 20% every year, the other costs such as maintenance, salaries and operations also increase at 10% every year(1). The demand for libraries and information services continues to grow. It has been said that knowledge doubles every 10 years. In the present information age, it will not be wrong to say that knowledge doubles in shorter span, say every 8 years (2). Though there are various competitors against books such as internet and television which also provide information, the fact remains that books and periodicals will continue to occupy the central position for education, study and self development.

Increased communication, business travels and change of perception levels of users call for a continuous improvement in the quality of the library and information services. Users have access to information right in their living rooms and they expect the library and information services to benchmark against the best in the world. Users now know their needs well and are quite demanding. There is a sort of 'do or die' battle in the business environment globally while the professionals need to demonstrate their capabilities and skills by showing work results. They need to rem...
updated all the time, even to remain where they are, leave alone going further up the ladder. This calls for continuous use of latest books and periodicals apart from accessing the www.

Managers and administrators all over the world, have started questioning the costs and measuring the effectiveness and impact for every operation. The purpose is to make sure that we get maximum effectiveness out of the scarce resources, in other words, more value for money. Libraries and information centres need to, on the one hand, cut down the costs and on the other hand, demonstrate optimum usage of the service. This calls for providing highly customer oriented library services, obtaining constant feedback and evaluation. Libraries need to market their services in order to promote the usage\(^3\). Finally, the pressure for revenue generation is all pervading\(^4\). The libraries and information centres are asked to generate revenue, wherever possible. The revenue generated, is ploughed back in order to provide better quality services. While on the one hand the libraries experience pressures of various kinds, on the other, there is increasing recognition of information as a resource \(^5\). In contrast to their predecessors, the present day managers, technologists, traders, businessmen and others need much more information in order to survive, let alone progress. With the acceleration of the process of liberalisation and globalisation, coupled with unprecedented technological developments in
vast information flow, the need for timely, pinpointed, correct and reliable information in India is more realised than ever before by business and industry houses. They need information continuously for sound decision making and even for survival. Shah\(^{(6)}\) estimates that there are minimum 10 crores of regular users of various types of information in India. Amongst these, there are quite many who can afford to pay for high cost service if the required information is properly presented and given in time. Manisha Saksena\(^{(7)}\) declares information as a product since it is an essential tradable commodity. The above scenario calls for a very skilful management of resources which includes:

- Provision of resources which match the customer requirements closely;
- Designing library systems and procedures which are customer friendly;
- Constant touch with the customers, both as a public relations exercise and as a method to obtain feedback;
- Providing an attractive physical environment which adds value;
- Proactive methods to increase the usage. This includes publicity, advertising and user orientation;
A reasonable policy for pricing library and information products. The pricing should be projected as a method for enhancing the library resources and not as a deterrent to use the library.

In other words, the present scenario calls for effective marketing.

1.1 Need for the study

The Library Science literature covers various marketing methods which promote the use of books and information. These include:

- User orientation;
- User surveys;
- Bringing out leaflets and handouts;
- Bibliographies and reading lists;
- Library displays and exhibitions;
- Book talks;
- Library stalls;
- Special lectures in the libraries;
- Advertising;
- Online publicity;
- Mailshots;
- Web based advertising.
The British Council libraries in India are high profile libraries and they enjoy good reputation. The staff are highly skilled, with good public contact and they employ many marketing techniques very imaginatively. Though the libraries rigorously conduct the marketing activities, there is a need to study the effectiveness of each marketing effort and identify the most effective ones. Also there is a need to link the marketing effort with the revenue generated. The present study aims to do this.

1.2 Statement of the study

The present study is an attempt to examine the various marketing techniques used by different libraries of the British Council network in India, i.e., Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Pune, Bhopal, and Chandigarh. The study also examines the effectiveness of marketing in terms of library revenue, membership, number of students enrolled in UK institutions and number of students taking UK examinations in India. The study includes customer surveys in all the eleven libraries in order to obtain their feedback on various services provided. Finally, the study makes recommendations for a holistic network for effective marketing of the British Council library services in India.
1.3 **Objectives of the study**

The present study has the following objectives:

(i) To study the various marketing activities in the eleven libraries of the British Council setup in India.

(ii) To study the comparative effect of different marketing techniques.

(iii) To give a rating for different marketing techniques.

(iv) To obtain customer preferences and feedback for the services provided by the libraries.

(v) To investigate the factors responsible for the low success rate in the case of certain services.

(vi) To propose an integrated network which helps the marketing of services.

1.4 **Hypotheses**

Normally scientific investigations start with the statement of a problem followed by a tentative generalisation in the form of a proposition which is called Hypothesis. Keeping in view the need for the study and its objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

i) Most of the British Council / British Library professionals are aware of professional marketing methods.
ii) Most of the library users are satisfied with the existing services provided.

iii) Marketing of UK university and education courses needs a more proactive and targeted approach than marketing the library and information services.

iv) Provision of adequate reading materials form the core of LIS marketing.

v) Application of information technology in libraries has an immediate relationship with the quality of services and customer satisfaction.

vi) Mere attracting people to the libraries does not yield the marketing results. There needs to be methods to convert the visitors to regular members by direct messages.

1.5 Methodology

There have been many methods and techniques which can be used for collecting the data. Generally the questionnaire method, interview method, observation method, case study method, Delphi technique, diffusion study techniques, critical incident methods etc are used in one or the other context. Any of these methods or a combination of two or more can be used in studying the "Effectiveness of marketing of information in British Council libraries in India". For the present study, questionnaires, interviews and observation in the form of anecdotal evidence were used.
Two separate questionnaires were designed: The first one was for the library managers in order to find out the marketing techniques they employ. The second one was to be filled up by the library users in order to find out from them how satisfied they were with the services provided.

Both the questionnaires were tested at the following three libraries: Delhi, Lucknow and Chandigarh. Based on the test results, the questionnaires were revised and the questionnaires were mailed to the target groups.

1.6 Chapterisation

The thesis has been organized into seven chapters which are as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduces to the concept of marketing in the area of library and information services and in British Council libraries in particular. The need for the study and objectives are given. The chapter also gives the methodology and chapterisation.

Chapter 2: Concepts of marketing. Various concepts of marketing followed by benefits of marketing in general and in LIS context in particular.

Chapter 3: Review of literature. A thorough review of related literature is given.
Chapter 4: British Council libraries in India. Traces the historical background of British Council libraries. Also explains the purposes of British Council libraries, role of libraries, their activities and programmes.

Chapter 5: Analysis of data. The data collected from various methods are presented both in tabular and narrative forms. The necessary interpretation is also given.

Chapter 6: Proposed networking. This chapter proposes a model for a closely integrated library network for British Council libraries in India which gives a holistic approach to the marketing of services.

Chapter 7: Findings, suggestions and conclusion. Gives findings, suggestions and highlights, future line of research and implications of this study. Select references have been presented at the end.
References


5. Shah, P.C. Grab the opportunity and survive - a challenge for university libraries. In Challenges before the university libraries in India in the


Note: (i) In this thesis, British Council libraries refer to all the eleven libraries of the British Council in India. The term includes both British Council and the British Libraries (ii) The terms – customer, reader, user, member – all mean the same and be treated as synonymous.