

BLI-222: INFORMATION SOURCES AND SERVICES
TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Coverage:

Course Code: BLI-222

Course: Information Sources and Services **Assignment Code: AST/TMA/ Jul.2024/Jan.2025**

Blocks: 1 to 4

Units: 1 to 14

Total Marks: 70

Note: Answer all questions.

I) Answer all the questions in not more than 500 words each. (4X10= 40 Marks)

- 1) What do you understand by primary periodicals? Discuss its different types with suitable examples. (10)
- 2) Describe in detail the process of computer-based searching. (10)
- 3) Explain, how peripheral information professionals can perform the functions of information disseminators. (10)
- 4) Discuss in detail how will you conduct a user study? (10)

II) Answer the following questions in not more 250 words each. (6X5= 30 marks)

- 1) Discuss the role of international agencies as sources of information. (5)
- 2) Describe the different types of information needs. (5)
- 3) Differentiate between responsive and anticipatory services. (5)
- 4) Discuss the emerging trends in database services. (5)
- 5) Explain the criteria for evaluating a dictionary. (5)
- 6) Discuss the process of implementing marketing mix in library services. (5)

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I). Answer the following questions in not more than 500 words each. (4X10=40 Marks)

Que: 1) What do you understand by primary periodicals? Discuss its different types with suitable examples.

Ans:

Primary Sources are original materials that offer direct evidence or firsthand accounts of events, research, or findings. These sources play a crucial role in research and scholarship, allowing scholars and practitioners to access unfiltered information. Among the different types of primary sources, Primary Periodicals are particularly significant as they primarily focus on disseminating new research.

Primary Periodicals:

Definition: Primary periodicals are scholarly publications that mainly consist of research papers and articles reporting original findings and interpretations in various fields. These journals are characterized by their commitment to quality and rigor, often undergoing a peer review process to ensure the validity of the research they publish.

Features of Primary Periodicals

- **Published by Reputable Organizations:** Primary periodicals are typically issued by learned societies, academic institutions, commercial publishers, or governmental organizations, ensuring a level of credibility and authority.
- **Original Research:** The articles featured in these journals present original research, providing new insights or interpretations in specific fields.
- **Peer Review Process:** To maintain high academic standards, submitted articles are subjected to a peer review process, where experts evaluate the research before publication.
- **Author Information:** These periodicals usually provide the author's contact information, facilitating communication between researchers.
- **Submission Dates:** The date when an article is received is often indicated, allowing readers to understand the timeline of the research.
- **Author Guidelines:** Instructions for authors are generally included, guiding prospective contributors on how to prepare their manuscripts.
- **Abstracts:** Most articles contain abstracts summarizing the research, enabling readers to quickly grasp the study's purpose and findings.

- **References:** Articles typically include lists of references to support their claims and provide sources for further investigation.
- **Indexing:** Primary periodicals are indexed in secondary periodicals, making them accessible for researchers looking to cite or build upon previous work.
- **Focus on Research Articles:** They tend not to include editorials, news items, or obituaries, keeping the content concentrated on research.
- **Examples of Primary Periodicals:**
 - *Indian Journal of Chemical Technology*
 - *Pramana – Journal of Physics*
 - *Tetrahedron*

Types of Primary Periodicals

1. Primary Periodicals Proper

These are the conventional research journals, typically comprising full-length articles that adhere to the features outlined above.

2. Letters Journals

These journals feature short communications, often called "letters to the editor," that summarize ongoing research or present preliminary findings.

Features: Articles are brief (usually one or two pages), are not heavily edited, and may include author details, submission dates, and references.

Examples:

Physical Review Letters

Tetrahedron Letters

3. Data Periodicals

Focus exclusively on numerical data relevant to specific scientific fields, providing essential information for researchers.

Examples:

Water Resources Data (published for various U.S. states).

Ionospheric Data, Delhi.

Calcutta Daily Weather Report.

4. Previews

These periodicals summarize upcoming articles and research findings, helping to prevent duplication of research efforts. They often provide author contact information for follow-up inquiries.

Examples:

Biochimica et Biophysica Acta, Previews.

Previews of Heat and Mass Transfer.

5. Synopsis Journals

These journals provide condensed versions of research papers, focusing on key findings or essential data rather than full-length articles. This format addresses the need for brevity in scientific communication.

Examples:

Journal of the American Chemical Society (offered both summary and archival versions).

6. Electronic Journals (E-journals)

Published in electronic format, these journals are increasingly prevalent. Many major primary periodicals are available in both print and electronic forms, while some are exclusively online, reflecting the growing trend towards digital scholarship.

Understanding the nature and types of primary periodicals is essential for researchers and students. These journals serve as vital resources for disseminating new findings, fostering academic discourse, and facilitating ongoing research in various fields. By providing access to original research, primary periodicals significantly contribute to the advancement of knowledge across disciplines.

Que.2) Describe in detail the process of computer-based searching.

Ans:

The computer-based search process has transformed how information is retrieved, offering speed and efficiency through advancements in information communication technologies (ICTs). Since the mid-1960s, when computers began to index and abstract periodicals, there has been a tremendous evolution in how searches are conducted. Early computers stored information on magnetic tapes, which were slow and cumbersome to search. However, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, improvements in computer speed, power, and memory—along with the ability to communicate remotely via telephone lines—made online searching feasible.

One of the first major online services was MEDLINE, the online version of MEDLARS (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System). Soon after, other services like DIALOG and ORBIT appeared, though they were costly and required intermediaries to conduct searches. By the 1990s, the rise of the World Wide Web, combined with graphical user interfaces and online tutorials, made online searching more accessible, even for novice users. Today, publications are available in multiple formats: CD-ROM, the web, online databases, and print. Electronic databases offer fast, flexible, and more frequently updated search options than their print counterparts.

Steps in Computer-Based Searching:

1. **Understanding the Subject:** Before conducting any search, it is essential to understand the subject area to identify the most relevant resources.
2. **Deciding Scope, Coverage, and Period:** Define the boundaries of your search, including the time frame and coverage of the information needed.
3. **Internet Access for Online Searches:** You need a reliable internet connection, typically through an Internet Service Provider (ISP), such as BSNL, Airtel, or Reliance. You also need to register with an online search service provider (e.g., EBSCO, ProQuest) for database access, often via a subscription or license.

4. **Logging on to the Search Service Provider:** Enter the service provider's web address and log in using your credentials. Many providers also offer online registration for easy access.
5. **Selecting the Appropriate Database:** Depending on the topic, browse through the categories provided by the search service to choose the right database. For instance, EBSCO offers databases tailored to various sectors such as academia, healthcare, or government institutions.
6. **Formulating the Search Expression:** This is a critical step where you carefully choose keywords or phrases that align with your search topic. Many databases have built-in thesauruses to assist in keyword selection. Familiarity with Boolean operators—**AND**, **OR**, and **NOT**—can help refine the search. For example, using **AND** narrows the results, while **OR** expands them.
7. **Selecting the Appropriate Format for Display:** Once the search begins, databases allow users to view either full records or brief summaries. This step is crucial for efficiently reviewing the search results.
8. **Reformulating the Search Expression:** If the initial search results are unsatisfactory, you can refine the keywords or search expression and run the query again. Online searches are often an iterative process, where the search query is adjusted multiple times to retrieve the best results.
9. **Selecting the Mode of Delivery:** Finally, users can choose how to receive the search results, either by downloading them directly or receiving them via email.

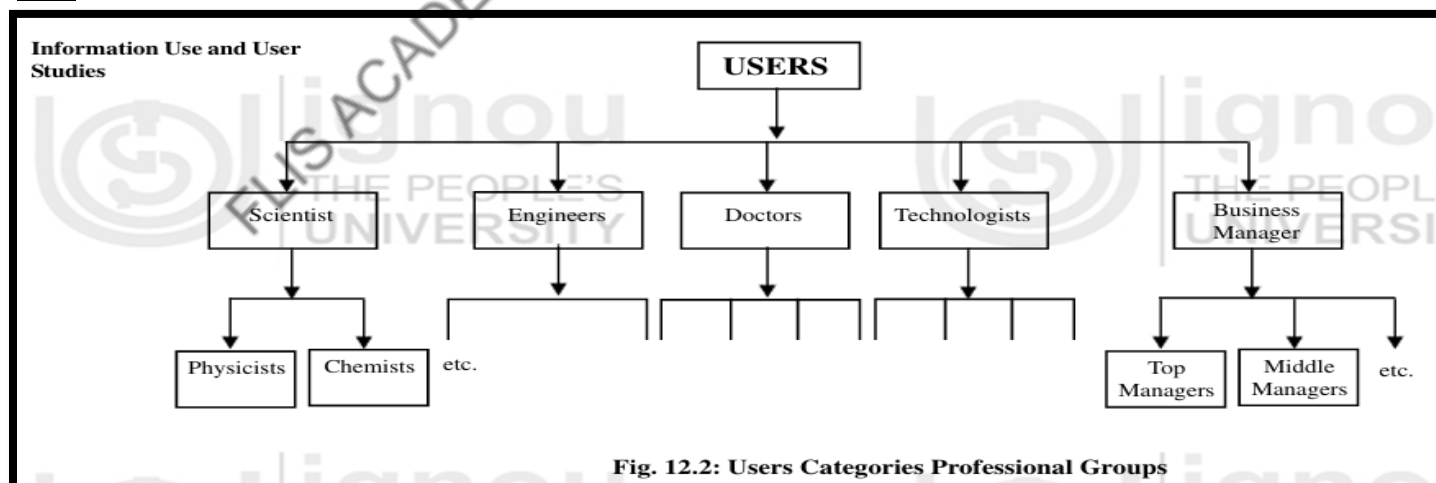
Search Formats:

- **CD-ROM Databases:** Offer offline searching but are updated less frequently than online databases.
- **Web-based and Online Databases:** These are updated more frequently, provide access to full-text articles, related journal links, and offer additional features such as document delivery and usage statistics.

The flexibility, ease, and efficiency of computer-based searching, particularly in today's internet-driven world, have made accessing information more manageable and accessible to users across various disciplines. By following these steps and using available tools, users can conduct precise, comprehensive searches with minimal effort.

Que. 3) Explain, how peripheral information professionals can perform the functions of information disseminators.

Ans:



Peripheral Information Professionals as Information Disseminators

Peripheral information professionals refer to individuals who are not typically considered information specialists, yet they gather, process, and disseminate vital information within their respective fields. These professionals, including lawyers, doctors, teachers, and others, play essential roles in making specialized knowledge accessible to the public. Below is an explanation of how some of these professionals serve as information disseminators:

- **Lawyers**

Lawyers are key information professionals in the legal domain. They provide crucial advice and guidance on various legal matters such as property disputes, criminal cases, and tax regulations. For instance, civil lawyers handle issues related to marriage registration, income tax, and business licenses, while criminal lawyers offer insight into criminal offenses like theft or fraud. By gathering facts, preparing legal documents, and presenting arguments in court, lawyers manage and disseminate essential legal information. Patent attorneys, for example, assist inventors in protecting their intellectual property rights, further illustrating how lawyers function as vital information disseminators within the legal framework.

- **Doctors**

Doctors are another significant category of peripheral information professionals. They diagnose illnesses, recommend treatments, and guide patients through their health issues. A doctor gathers information by examining symptoms and ordering diagnostic tests when necessary. Based on the information they collect, doctors inform patients about their medical conditions, prescribe medication, and offer instructions on how to use it. Doctors often update patients on preventive health measures and lifestyle changes, making them critical sources of health-related information. Their role is not just in treating diseases but also in educating individuals about health management, disease prevention, and the latest medical advancements.

- **Teachers**

Teachers are knowledge custodians who impart information on the subjects they specialize in, contributing to education and research. Teachers have deep knowledge of academic resources, including books, journals, research opportunities, and educational institutions both in the country and abroad. They also provide students with career guidance, including job prospects, scholarships, and academic research opportunities. As information disseminators, teachers play a significant role in shaping students' knowledge and future careers by sharing educational resources, insights into their subjects, and professional advice. Teachers also help students develop critical thinking skills, thus enabling them to access and interpret information independently.

- **Experts**

Experts are individuals with specialized knowledge in a particular domain. Their role as information disseminators becomes prominent when organizations require their insight for decision-making, recruitment, or project assessments. For instance, in the hiring process for a specialized role like an information scientist, an expert may be involved in interviewing and evaluating candidates. Experts often provide guidance when specific knowledge is required, thus ensuring that accurate and relevant information is used in decision-making processes. Their deep understanding of their subject matter makes them indispensable in disseminating specialized information within their fields.

- **Technological Gatekeepers**

Technological gatekeepers are professionals who excel at staying informed about the latest developments in their respective areas of expertise. These individuals, often scientists or technologists, actively gather and share new

information about innovations, making them key disseminators of specialized technical knowledge. Unlike traditional information professionals, technological gatekeepers acquire knowledge through their networks and ensure that relevant updates reach those in need, such as colleagues, organizations, or research teams. They serve as information hubs, facilitating the flow of technical knowledge that may not be readily available through formal channels.

- **Common People**

Common people, including children, village heads, and family elders, are also sources of valuable information. Children, through their natural curiosity, often gather and share information about their surroundings, school, and local events. Village heads and family leaders are frequently consulted for information about local traditions, family histories, and social practices. Though not formally trained as information professionals, these individuals possess rich knowledge about their communities and can serve as trustworthy sources of information in various social contexts.

Peripheral information professionals, though not directly classified as traditional information specialists, play a crucial role in collecting, processing, and sharing information. Their contributions, whether in legal, medical, academic, or technological fields, significantly enhance knowledge dissemination, making information more accessible to individuals and organizations across sectors. Their ability to communicate specialized knowledge effectively makes them indispensable in today's information-driven society.

Que.4) Discuss in detail how will you conduct a user study?

Ans:

Conducting a user study requires meticulous planning and execution. It is a systematic process aimed at understanding users' needs, behaviors, and interactions with various systems. Based on the provided content, the following steps and methodologies are crucial for conducting an effective user study:

1. Planning the User Study

A user study must begin with a detailed plan that outlines every stage of the process. This involves:

- **Defining Objectives:** Clearly articulate the purpose of the study, specifying what needs to be discovered.
- **Translation of Objectives into Questions:** Break down the objectives into specific questions or areas for investigation.
- **Selection of Tools and Techniques:** Identify the methods and tools that will be used to gather data.
- **Sample Selection:** Decide on the population to be studied and develop a plan for gaining their cooperation.
- **Pre-testing:** Pilot test the selected techniques to ensure their effectiveness.
- **Execution:** Conduct the study, analyze the data, and prepare the final report.

2. Steps in the Plan

A comprehensive user study plan includes the following steps:

1. **Survey Previous Studies:** Review existing literature to understand prior research and methodologies in user studies.
2. **Define Objectives:** Clearly specify the goals of the study.
3. **Identify Variables:** Determine the key factors or variables to be studied and select an appropriate study model.
4. **Sample Selection:** Choose a representative sample population to ensure accurate and meaningful results.

5. **Data Collection Methods:** Identify suitable methods for collecting data, such as surveys, interviews, or observations.
6. **Data Analysis Methods:** Decide on statistical or semantic techniques to analyze the collected data.
7. **Presentation and Dissemination:** Plan how the results will be presented and utilized.

3. Categories of User Studies

User studies can be categorized into four main types based on their objectives:

- **Communication Behavior Studies:** Analyze the interaction patterns of users with communication systems.
- **User Studies:** Investigate the use of specific communication mediums, such as journals or periodicals.
- **Information Flow Studies:** Examine the flow of information within a particular communication system.
- **Library-Specific Studies:** Focus on evaluating the usage of library services and facilities to improve them.

4. Methodologies for User Studies

There are various methodologies for conducting user studies, classified as follows:

General or Conventional Methods:

- **Questionnaire:** Collect structured data through pre-designed questions.
- **Interview:** Gather detailed information through direct interaction.
- **Diary:** Users record their activities or behaviors over a specific period.
- **Self-Observation:** Observers record user behaviors in real-time.
- **Operations Research Study:** Employ mathematical or logical techniques for analysis.

Indirect Methods:

- **Library Records Analysis:** Study library records to infer user behavior.
- **Citation Analysis:** Analyze citations to determine information use patterns.

Special and Unconventional Methods:

- **Computer Feedback:** Use automated systems to gather user feedback.
- **Unconventional Techniques:** Explore innovative methods tailored to the study's objectives.

5. Data Collection Methods

- **Surveying:** Directly question users about their behavior, preferences, or conditions.
- **Observation:** Monitor user behavior in specific situations.
- **Records Analysis:** Analyze existing records or statistics.
- **Experimentation:** Introduce variables and observe their effects on user behavior.

6. Sampling Methods

Sampling is a critical aspect of any user study. Common sampling methods include:

- **Convenience Sampling:** Selecting readily available users.
- **Random Sampling:** Choosing users randomly from the population.
- **Stratified Sampling:** Dividing the population into subgroups and sampling from each.
- **Representative Sampling:** Selecting individuals or groups that represent specific characteristics.

7. Data Analysis Techniques

Analyzing data effectively is vital for deriving meaningful results. Common methods include:

- **Statistical Analysis:** Apply statistical tools to summarize and compare numerical data.
- **Semantic Analysis:** Interpret and summarize verbal data.
- **Psycho-Social Analysis:** Use psychological or sociological techniques for conceptual data.
- **Economic Analysis:** Derive conclusions using economic frameworks.

8. Practical Considerations

- Avoid collecting data without a clear plan for analysis.
- Seek the assistance of a statistician for selecting appropriate methods.
- Avoid incorporating unnecessary or irrelevant statistics.

II) ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN NOT MORE 250 WORDS EACH. (6X5= 30 MARKS)

Que.1) Discuss the role of international agencies as sources of information.

Ans:

International Agencies as Sources of Information

International agencies play a crucial role in development, especially in developing countries, by providing vital data, research, and expertise that shape policies and programs aimed at improving social, economic, and environmental conditions.

- The United Nations (UN)

The UN is a primary source of information through its various programs and specialized agencies. The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** promotes international cooperation among its 193 member states in education, science, culture, and communication. It acts as a clearing house for disseminating knowledge, helping member states build their capacities.

- World Health Organization (WHO)

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** is the leading authority on global health, responsible for shaping health research agendas and providing technical support to countries. Its publications, including the **World Health Report** and **World Health Statistics**, are essential resources for public health officials and policymakers.

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** leads efforts to combat hunger and improve nutrition. It serves as a neutral forum for negotiating policies and publishes over 300 titles annually on topics like food security and climate change, providing comprehensive analyses through reports such as the **State of Food Insecurity in the World**.

- Regional Organizations

Regional entities like the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** and **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)** also contribute significantly by promoting economic development and facilitating information exchange among member states.

International agencies are indispensable sources of information that empower countries to address complex challenges and foster sustainable development. Their collaborative efforts enhance global well-being, particularly in developing nations.

Que.2) Describe the different types of information needs.

Ans

The Need for Information: Information is essential across various aspects of life, influencing education, research, employment, healthcare, entertainment, and lifelong learning. It serves as a vital resource for socio-economic development, providing countries with economic, technological, and political advantages. Access to the latest scientific, technical, and commercial information is crucial for informed decision-making and effective governance.

- **Types of Information Needs**

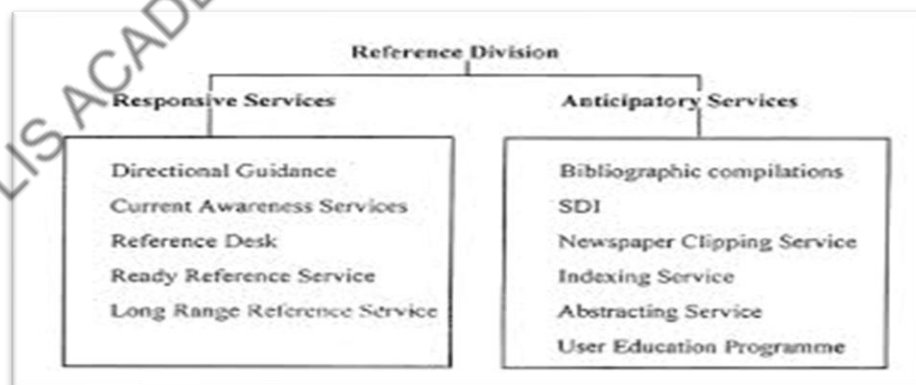
User surveys have identified **four primary types of information needs**, which vary based on individual circumstances and contexts:

1. **Current Information Needs:** This type pertains to users who seek to stay updated with the latest developments in their field. For instance, professionals in the corporate sector need regular insights about market trends, competitors, and innovations to remain competitive.
2. **Exhaustive Information Needs:** Primarily experienced by researchers, this need arises when an individual requires comprehensive information on a specific subject. Before embarking on a research project, scholars conduct thorough literature reviews to identify gaps and avoid duplicating existing studies.
3. **Everyday Information Needs:** These are specific requests for factual information relevant to daily activities. For example, a scientist might seek the melting point of a compound, or an individual might need a phone number. This need is often pragmatic and immediate.
4. **Catching-Up Information Needs:** This arises when someone unfamiliar with a subject needs a concise overview of its developments. For example, a researcher working on a multidisciplinary project may need a brief yet comprehensive summary of related fields to integrate knowledge effectively.

In addition to these four types, there are also **General Reading Needs** and a **Need for Informal Information**, both contributing to personal and professional development.

Que.3) Differentiate between responsive and anticipatory services.

Ans:



- **Responsive Information Services**

Responsive information services (also known as passive information services) are provided in response to a request from the users. The request may come from the user in person, over the telephone, through correspondence, or via e-mail. Requests may be for finding general information about the library, its layout, how

to become a member, how to use catalogue, or for finding answer to a particular question or getting a particular document from the library.

These services can be broadly categorised as follows:

1) Provision of general information

2) Reference service

- Ready reference service
- Long range reference service

3) Literature search and compiling a subject bibliography

4) Assistance in the use of library collection and library tools

5) Document delivery service

6) Referral service

• **Anticipatory Information Services**

Anticipatory information services are provided to library users in anticipation of their demands for such services. These services are also called active information services. The need for such services was felt mainly due to:

- i) Exponential growth of published literature, particularly in the field of science and technology;
- ii) Interdisciplinary nature of frontline areas of research, resulting in scattering of information in different disciplines; and
- iii) Publications of research results in different types of sources (like primary research periodicals, research reports, conference proceedings, dissertations, etc.), languages as well as in different formats (like print or electronic).

As a consequence of the growth in volume, diversity, and complexity of information sources, scientists, technologists, researchers and managers faced problems in accessing information and in keeping themselves abreast of the latest developments in their fields of interest. To solve this problem, the libraries, particularly, scientific and technical libraries started providing information services to the users, mainly to the researchers. Now, not only S&T libraries, but all kinds of libraries and information/documentation centres, are offering some form of anticipatory information service, depending upon the needs of their clients. To provide these services, user's information needs are assessed and then services are designed accordingly. Initially, the service is provided on trial basis and when response is satisfactory then the service is regularised.

Types of anticipatory services are offered:

- 1. Current Awareness Type**
- 2. Condensation Type**
- 3. Readers Advisory Service**
- 4. Information Literacy Training**

Que.4) Discuss the emerging trends in database services.

Ans:

Database Services - Emerging Trends

Impact of ICT has brought a spectacular change in information storage, retrieval, and dissemination related activities. Producers of indexing and abstracting periodicals and publishers of primary periodicals, which were two separate industries earlier, are now merging or entering into partnership. Publishers of primary journals are offering online access to full-text e-journals to the subscribers of their print publications under license agreement. Producers of bibliographic databases are diversifying by bringing out factual statistical and multimedia databases. They are offering linkages from citations to full-text journal articles on publisher's site. As demands for multimedia

databases is growing, database producers are increasingly adding graphics, images, audio and video to the technical contents of the databases. Apart from providing linkage services, the publishers are offering additional services to the end-users like journal issue alert, citation alert, topic alert service and many more. Database producers are offering customised services by bringing out different products according to requirements of different clients. New generation of e-journal service providers are emerging like aggregators. Aggregators like EBSCO and ProQuest, with license rights from primary publishers are providing online access to full-text online aggregated databases. They are also providing links from secondary services to the full-text articles online. Many database search service providers allow search results to be sorted out by various parameters like date, author, source or relevance and save it to user's personal account. Some allow graphical display of search results. Many more players have joined database service market like digital libraries, institutional repositories, open access e-journal initiators, search engines and others.

Que.5) Explain the criteria for evaluating a dictionary.

Ans:

Dictionaries: Evaluation Criteria

1. **Past Record:** This reflects a dictionary's history and evolution. For example, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) started as the "New English Dictionary" and has since expanded into various well-known publications, establishing a trusted brand.
2. **Authority:** A dictionary's credibility is determined by its publisher's reputation and the expertise of its lexicographers. Renowned authors and experienced editors contribute to its trustworthiness.
3. **Scope:** Comprehensive dictionaries cover common words, scientific terms, idioms, slang, and even proper names. An unabridged dictionary may have over 400,000 entries, while a desk dictionary might have around 200,000.
4. **Arrangement:** Entries are typically organized alphabetically, either letter-by-letter or word-by-word (as in the COD).
5. **Word Treatment:** Key aspects include:
 - **Spelling:** Distinguishes between British and American forms.
 - **Pronunciation:** Uses phonetic symbols for clarity.
 - **Definitions:** Should be clear and user-friendly.
 - **Quotations, Synonyms, Antonyms:** Enhance understanding.
6. **Special Features:** Common elements include usage guides and abbreviation lists. Some dictionaries may offer additional references, like style manuals or directories.
7. **Revision:** Dictionaries must be updated regularly to incorporate new words, though new editions often take years to produce.
8. **Format:** Usability features, typography, and layout also matter.

Not all dictionaries cover every aspect discussed. Each has unique strengths, so users should assess their needs to choose the most suitable option, using a checklist for guidance.

Que.6) Discuss the process of implementing marketing mix in library services.

Ans:

Marketing mix is one of the most important and fundamental development in the area of marketing. Marketing mix is a set of controllable, tactical marketing tools that the firm (organisation) blends to produce the response it wants in the target market. It consists of everything the firm can do to influence the demand for its product. Marketing mix is commonly referred to the four P's of marketing– product, price, place and promotion. This is a simple, yet effective means of considering the key elements necessary and the emphasis to be placed on each, in order to ensure effective implementation of marketing strategy.

Product: All products or services or offers, present and potential, aimed at meeting the needs of the users.

Price: All costs put in by the user to find relevant information or service or product, may be money, time, efforts.

Place: The way in which information product/ service is made available to users, on campus or remote location, online or virtual.

Promotion: All methods of communicating with users one-way, two way and both.

People: People who are involved in the delivery of service.

Physical Evidence: Surroundings of the library, within and outside, through which users make use of it.

Process: Interaction of various activities by which services are created, performed and delivered

IMPLEMENTING MARKETING IN LIBRARIES

Peter F. Drucker rightly said 'Sooner or later all thinking and planning has to degenerate into work' and all marketing thinking and planning accordingly has to be put into work. Effective implementation of marketing largely relies upon the following aspects:

- Developing a marketing culture throughout the library; everyone must realise this and work for the marketing success.
- Promoting service culture.
- Developing growth oriented, services oriented staff, as the staff makes marketing success in any service unit.
- Developing a clear statement of the expenditure to achieve the desired level of marketing success.
- Developing and implementing the marketing plan and actions associated with it.– Asking for feedback, reviews and insights to help achieve the targets more efficiently.
- Putting marketing efforts consistently over a period of time.
- Monitoring marketing efforts as to know how the outcome of marketing activities has been effective.

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