



# Amitrakshar International Journal

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## Public Relation in Libraries: a review

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### Abstract:

Based on various research papers, the article discusses libraries and public relation in detail. The research methodology and research objectives are discussed. The three media of public relation in libraries, namely visual, electronic and oral or traditional, are discussed. The objectives of public relations in libraries and how to further improve to reach all the people of the society through traditional and extended library services are discussed. Finally, the role of library staff in increasing the public relations of libraries with the general public of the society is discussed.

**Keywords:** Library, Public relation, Print media, electronic media, Oral media, Regular service, Extension service

### Introduction:

'Library' and 'People' these two words complement each other. It is unthinkable to have a library but not have contact with the people. With the development and application of digital resources there is a paradigm shift from traditional learning to blended learning. There are two types of users in the library- those who are aware of the use of the library and another type of users who are indifferent to use of the library, whether they come to the library or not. Among them there are many educated people who don't realise that the work of a library is not limited to just a repository of books and not limited to lending and borrowing of books but have now taken on one of the responsibilities of increasing the people's thirst for knowledge through blended learning resources. Here is the need of public relations of the library to reach the people. In the olden days, readers had to come to the library to gain knowledge, but now the librarian has to go to the library to take the books to the readers, only then will the interest of reading books increase, the use of the library and the number of readers will increase.

### Methodology:

I have prepared my research paper on the basis of literature reviews related to public relation in libraries and express my views to describe, so it is a descriptive review paper.

### Purpose of the study:

- 1) To know what is public relation
- 2) To know different media of public relation
- 3) Need of public relation in libraries
- 4) Methods of public relations in libraries

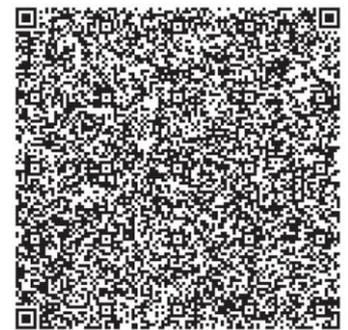
### Literature review:

Library public relations include ongoing activities to ensure the library has a strong image. Public relations activities as they relate to the role of the reference librarian in an academic library are discussed. The role of the reference librarian as the public relations officer of his or her library in fulfilling the objectives of the library and the institution. Great public relations can substantially accelerate librarian development cycle, increase user's awareness and promote rapid growth. [Isreal, 2012]

Many in the university community perceived that internet and mega book stores are better place to find information that they need. Defending the university Libraries existence becomes a serious challenge today thus the need to get the word out to draw people into their doors, a strategy such as public relation needs to be employed. [Fleix, 2015]

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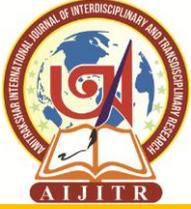
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Public relations practices in school libraries in the state include readers services, use of Librarian's notice board, book talks, library display and exhibitions. It was also revealed that the requisite competence of librarian as public relation officers are good communication skills, professional experience, knowledge of ICT and good marketing skills. Public relation practices enhanced service delivery and librarian's image. [Ejike, 2019]

The need to use advocacy and lobbying in Nigerian special libraries to explain, justify, support, defend and influence things to her favour in such forums as library-user interactive forums, top management meetings, budget defense and so on, so that they could be better understood, valued and paid attention to enable them serve their parent institutions better. [Mngutyo, 2020]

### Public Relations:

Public Relation is an essential part of any management system today. American management experts introduced this concept in the post-world war II [2 ]

According to Carroll Bateman, former president of the Public Relation Society of America, "Public Relation is the planned effort of a business organization or other institution to integrate itself into the society in which it exists". [3 ]

According to Harrison and Benham, the real beginning of public relations is the good use of library staff and its success depends on the satisfaction of the reader through the smooth transaction of library materials. This requires a beautiful environment, good services and good use. [4]

### Media for Public Relations:

There are three levels of media for public relations, such as print media i.e. books, newspapers, brochures etc. another is electronic media i.e. radio, television, microphone, computer etc. and the other is oral media or traditional media like folk music, yatra, storytelling etc. This oral media is the most important for direct communication with the people, because there are some limitations of print and electronic media. For example, the message of print media does not reach illiterate, electronic media also cannot reach everyone due to some of its technical limitations of print and electronic media, only traditional or oral media can reach everyone.

### Need of Public Relations in Libraries

- 1) To increase library awareness among people
- 2) Converting potential users into actual users
- 3) To inform people about all types of library services
- 4) To bring people who are not covered by library services
- 5) To strengthen the existence of librarian in society
- 6) To increase the love of reading
- 7) Enhanced community engagement
- 8) Improve literacy rates

### Methods of Public Relations in Libraries:

In the modern era, the library is a vibrant institution. The library is a part of society. It is the responsibility of the library authorities to inform the public about the facilities that can be found in the library. The present era is the era of publicity. To increase the use of libraries, the help of publicity should be taken as needed. The main purpose of this publicity is how the library can serve the public, what the library is doing and what it can do to satisfy the thirst for knowledge of the general public. Public relation can be done in two ways.

#### 1) Through publicity of regular services:

It is necessary to inform the new reader or user about the details of regular library usage. Orientation or workshop can be arranged. Audiovisual aids or printed instructions, display board can be used to present various topics including the usefulness of the library, methods of using the library. some example of regular library services:

- a) **Library Rules and Regulation:** Lib rules and regulation should be explained before the library users by using different media of public relation.
- b) **Library collection:** Users must provide adequate information on library collection. Various types of library collection e.g. printed books, printed journals, digital books and journals, manuscripts, audio visual materials etc.
- c) **Section of Library:** A large library build up with its various section i.e. technical section, reference section, periodical section, reading room, circulation section, digital section etc. should be explained before the library users by using different media of public relation.
- d) **Facilities:** Like lending, reading room, access to digital and online resources should be explain.
- e) **Use of catalogue:** In the library public relation programme user must be guided about the use of library catalogue. Cataloguing format, arrangement rules, search technique must be explained.



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f) **Use of Reference Book:** Generally normal users do not know how to find an answer of a specific question from a reference books, e.g. encyclopaedia, yearbook, almanac or biographical information books. In library orientation programme users must be guided. [8]

## 2) Through publicity of extension services:

Extension services in libraries are programmes and activities that extend library resources and services beyond the physical library walls to reach broader communities and individuals. Through various programmes and proper planning, the extension services are efforts to reach the maximum number of people. [9]

The extension services may be organised through various programmes like:

- Reading Circle:** Facilitated discussions of books and related materials.
- Story Hour:** Engaging sessions for children and families with storytelling and reading aloud.
- Book fair and exhibitions:** Displays of books, resources, and related materials
- Mobile library service:** Bringing library resources to communities that may not have easy access to the main library location.
- Adult education programme:** Providing courses and workshops for adult learners.
- Cultural Programme:** Organising events like music performances, art exhibitions and community festivals.
- Interlibrary Loan:** Making resources available from other libraries.
- Virtual services:** Providing access to online databases, e-books, and online reference services. [10]

## Library staff in Public Relation:

Library staff must continuously strive for the development of the library system, implementation of expansion programmes and provision of improved services. Library workers are not only warehouse keepers, but also guardians of books. Library staff must fulfil increased responsibilities to meet the expectation of the people. Therefore, to increase public relations with the library, library staff must be

- more sincere
- welcoming
- humble, gentle
- skilled and possess personality
- sociable
- loyal
- and have close personal relationships with various public organisations, institutions

## Conclusion:

Public relation is about promoting the various functions and quality standards of an organisation and good relations between the organisation's employees and users. But this is only partially true. In fact, real public relations depend on good and successful services. Promotion and good relation only create awareness and attract people temporarily. But if there is no good service, people will turn away forever. Therefore, for public relations, the first thing that is needed to improve the quality of services. And as a medium of public relations, one should choose a subject that can easily reach people or is easily within people's reach. Therefore, mass media or traditional media are more suitable in this regard than print and electronic media. It is not possible to broadcast all library news on radio or television, nor is it possible to broadcast all news through newspapers. As a result of public relations, people can understand the usefulness of the library, but those who will do public relations, namely library staff, library management committee and library movement activists, need to have a clear idea about this. Otherwise, no matter how many activities are taken up in libraries regarding public relations, it will be difficult to implement them.

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