

AN OVERVIEW OF RASHTRIYA SANSKRIT SANSTHAN'S REFERENCE SERVICE IN WEB ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper is the study about an overview of Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan's Reference Service in Web Environments. Library and information science education is a professional education and it is specialized area of providing services. Accordingly it provides types of services such as CAS, SDI, ILL, Reference Services etc. The development in information technology has made drastic changes in the way the information is collected, stored, retrieved, and distributed. Reference Services are also one of the products of Information and communication technologies. Perceptions of librarianship and information work require mastery to the body of knowledge and techniques providing Reference Services in library and information operations and services, which constitute the discipline "Library and Information Science". It includes about objective of library, library services, reference service in web environment, virtual reference.

Keywords: Library Service; Reference services; Reference services in web environments; Mobile reference; Digital reference

1. THE LIBRARY

Library as social institution brings in to relation the writer, publisher, librarian, and reader. This relationship can also be viewed in terms of producer, intermediary and consumer. Library education is professional education concerned with library activities and functions, which bring efficiency, competence, confidence and leadership in the students, who educate themselves in this education.

2. OBJECTIVE OF LIBRARY

To assemble, preserve and administer books and related educational materials in order to promote, through guidance and stimulation, an enlightened citizenship and enriched personal lives

- To serve the community as a general center of reliable information
- To provide opportunity and encouragement for children, young people men and women to educate themselves continuously

3. FUNCTIONS OF LIBRARY

- To increase economic resource of humanity to the extent necessary to maintain the ever increasing population, in comfort and free from want of any kind and also
- To help in the elevating, self-independent use of leisure with the aid of freely served books, pictures, sound records and graphic materials
- To help in increasing the opportunity for the spiritual awakening of one and all of the members of humanity
- Service towards user community

4. LIBRARY SERVICES

Libraries help the user to get the information they want. For this purpose the library staff has developed a number of tools and techniques. In addition the reference library staff provides personalized service, whenever the user is in difficulty. Services other than these normal services, one can call as reference services.

5. REFERENCE SERVICE

There was not any effort to use the library, but now -a -days when libraries are regarded as a service institution. The librarians make different efforts to make effective use of the library. In the modern time reference service is the ultimate goal of all libraries services. It is the service that connects the user with their documents and information and helps the process of promoting the use of the library. Evolving information technologies are dramatically changing every aspect of our personal, social and professional lives. The library and information profession is also facing the challenges of electronic age and been transformed by technology. Advancements in information technologies have bought incredible changes in almost every aspect of information services. Reference services are also not an exception. Easily accessible digital information has rapidly become one of the hallmarks of Internet. Internet has also proved as a cost effective and efficient alternative to traditional communication methods. All these developments gave way to new range of reference services. In this series of developments digital reference service is the latest trend for digital era.

6. CONCEPT OF REFERENCE SERVICE

Reference service represent a specialize study in library science. It is that phase of library work, which is directly concerned with assistance to readers in securing information and in using resources of the library in study and research (ALAGLT), Reference Service as personal service, to each reader in helping him, to find the documents answering his interest at the moment pin-pointedly, exhaustively and expeditiously (Ranganathan).

Essentially a reference service incorporates the following three basic elements:

- Information or knowledge base
- User or client now likely to be a member of the new cyber community in which the library operates
- Information professionals or librarian, who plays the role of intermediary assisting and advising the user in their information seeking

Over the years the structure of knowledge and the way of accessing it is greatly influenced by the technological advancements in the field of information products is available in electronic and digital form to work. Essence of the five laws of library science is that user and his information need is the prime factor in designing a reference service. Reference service is user centered. It means the emphasis is not on the book, the reference tool or the format of the information sought, but on the user, their needs and the service that can be offered to meet these needs and the education of the user in the structures of knowledge, and ways of accessing and evaluating it. With the technological advancements, user's information seeking behavior has also changed. User does not want to visit physically an information Centre or library rather he expects the required information right on his complete screen at his seat sitting at some remote location. This means no face-to-face discussion is required. The role of reference service in libraries is essentially changed dramatically changed paradigm. The change that have made to keep on exploring the present and future possibilities to redesign and implement new range of services as with the time's need and to keep pace with the upcoming technological challenges. The paradigm of reference service developed out of this strong user-centered base, now seek to re-create in the digital environment, knowledge through the reference sources themselves and the information professionals knowledge of those information sources.

7. SERVICE NECESSITATED

Reference services in a library are necessary in information explosion, bewildering library techniques, types of users, complexity in the physical forms of documents, complexity in the organization of information, time value of information, universal education, barriers to communication and in observation in five laws of library science have necessitated the reference services.

8. REFERENCE SERVICE IN WEB ENVIRONMENT

E-mail reference is a service in which patrons request information from librarians through electronic mail. Brenda Philip discusses some of the characteristics of electronic mail. Many libraries provide patrons with an electronic form to download on which they fill in their information request and then return the form to the library through electronic mail. Another way of providing e-mail reference is through a bulletin board system in which a database of questions and answers are provided (i.e. Cleveland Free Net). E-mail reference is becoming increasingly available through libraries' web sites; e-mail reference forms are created using hypertext markup language. Most types of libraries offer e-mail reference. In order to compete with the Internet and assert its relevance in the face of dwindling funding, libraries are increasingly offering e-mail reference services.

9. VIRTUAL REFERENCE SERVICE

Virtual reference services are the remote delivery of reference source materials that are provided to users who are not inside the library. They are used by people seeking to utilize resources who are unable (or unwilling) to visit a library. Providing remote based services for patrons has been a steady practice of libraries over the years. For example, a number of reference questions have been answered via phone, fax email and voice conferencing. However, with the widespread use and adaptation of Web culture, it has been the library institutions goal to incorporate and utilize remote based programs for the user's advantage. VRS is defined as the provision of real-time personal assistance to patrons via web-based interactive software. To meet the user at his or her "point of need" and to satisfy the patron's information need, the librarian can use a "chat" component of the software to answer a fairly specific or simple question, possibly deliver slideshows, 'push' web sources to the patron, and provide online bibliographic instruction. The "point of need" may happen when the library is closed, or when the user is unable to get to the library. This way, users can still be in contact with experienced reference librarians (Alaska's Virtual Reference Service Project: Final Report, 2002). Virtual reference (also called Web reference and real time reference) started a couple of years ago when libraries began experimenting with Web-based customer service software originally designed for answering questions on ecommerce sites like L. L. Bean and Land's End. This software, often referred to as Web Contact Center Software, allowed a Customer Service Representative (CSR) to communicate with a customer by phone or by chat while at the same time sending relevant Web pages to the customer. The result was that the CSR and customer could discuss a product while looking at images or textual information about it. In addition, some of this software also incorporated the ability to send documents in just about any format to the customer, and to annotate documents with or for the customer. Of most interest to librarians was the provision of synchronous communication and sharing of Web-based and other information.

Further, with the advent of the Internet and web-based delivery of formerly print resources, library users are relying more and more frequently on information accessed via computer whether it is from the library or

not. Given the typical library patron's reliance on and interest in retrieving as much information as possible online, and given librarians' collective awareness of this situation, it's not surprising that Web Contact Center Software interested some librarians. These librarians quickly envisioned themselves slipping into the Customer Service Representative seat, but instead of responding to questions about the size, color and utility of products, the librarian would answer typical reference questions in a show-and-tell environment that mimicked in house reference services. Barely two years after these wishful thoughts entered our minds, many libraries, largely in the US and Canada and Australia have created virtual reference services. Depending on how you classify and count these services, anywhere from 300 to 500 libraries are offering virtual reference services that go beyond email based Ask-A Librarian services.

10. USE OF REFERENCE 2.0

- Library web sites – Wikis and Blogs such as Ohio University Libraries Biz Wiki
- Libraries using Face book, My Space, Twitter.
- Hennepin County and Univ. of Massachusetts are on Face book
- Brooklyn College and Denver Public Library are on My-Space
- Libraries using Second Life
- Widgets – University of Texas

11. MOBILE REFERENCE

- Web page designed for mobile users
- New York Public Library
- Databases designed for mobile users
- EBSCO
- Mobile chat
- Cornell University Library
- Santa Clara County Library

12. VIRTUAL REFERENCE SERVICE DELIEVERY MODELS /FORMS / TYPES

- ❖ The user
- ❖ The Interface (Web Form, E-mail, Chat, Video).
- ❖ Electronic Resources (including Electronic or CD-based Resources; Web Resources; Local Digitized Material etc), as well as Print Resources
- ❖ The information professional

13. THE FUTURE

- ❖ Libraries need to keep up with user needs
- ❖ The best news is that librarians are trying many new models of reference service
- ❖ The models that work best may be tailored to the individual library and its clientele
- ❖ But what is certain is that librarians must be more visible and that marketing is essential

14. SOME GUIDELINES

- Need to follow interests of community
- Need to decide whether to implement a new service immediately, carefully test it
- How it impacts on existing library services
- How it can link to other technology

15. DIGITAL REFERENCE SERVICE

Digital reference is an emerging trend of traditional reference service. Digital reference service is only an advancement of the same traditional services, which is emerging as natural solution to meet the user's information needs in the changing technological environment. Technically speaking digital reference refers to a network of expertise, human intermediation and resources placed at the disposal of users in an online environment. It employs automated tools wherever possible, allowing human experts to concentrate on hard questions. Digital reference is a service by which library reference service is conducted online, and the reference transaction is a computer-mediated communication. The earliest digital reference services were launched in the mid-1980s, primarily by academic and medical libraries, and provided by e-mail. These early-adopter libraries launched digital reference services for two main reasons: to extend the hours that questions could be submitted to the reference desk, and to explore the potential of campus-wide networks, which at that time was a new technology. With the advent of the graphical World Wide Web, libraries quickly adopted web forms for question submission. Since then, the percentage of questions submitted to services via web forms has outstripped the percentage submitted via email. In the early- to mid-1990s, digital reference services began to appear that were not affiliated with any library. These digital reference services are often referred to as "Ask a services".

16. E-REFERENCE BOOKS

Many reference books are also brought out in CD-ROM formats and available online through payment. There are a number of reference sources available freely on-line through Internet.

<http://www.britannica.com/>

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

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