Assuring Quality Services through Library Standards

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Abstract

Standards assure quality in any service or product. Standards in library and information services are essential from it operational or functional point of view thereby providing quality in library and information services. The present paper discussed the need for library standards and provides the best guidelines as benchmarks for different sections of a library such as Acquisition, Technical, Circulation, Journals, Maintenance and Computerization as per Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The author explained the different standards for library services developed by BIS(Bureau of Indian Standards) through its sectional committee-MSD5(Documentation and Information) in order to bring uniformity and efficiency in library services. The world trade market demands that the Indian standards need to be compatible with international standards developed by ISO including library and information products or services.

Keywords

Library and Information Services, Standards, Role of BIS

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Electronic access

The journal is available at www.jalis.in

Journal of Advances in Library and Information Science
ISSN: 2277-2219 Vol. 5. No.1. 2016. pp. 12-17

1.0 INTRODUCTION

When we think of library services, two questions come to our mind. Firstly what constitutes the best services and secondly what constitutes the best management for it. The answers to these questions are – "Development of Standards". A standard is a document, which provides requirements, specification, guidelines or characteristics, which can be used consistently to ensure that – materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purposes. In most of the developed countries, laws have been passed years ago to follow standards. Therefore, legally established standards exist in different fields of subjects including library science. A New York law of 1921 gives the Regents Power to fix standards of service for all libraries supported by public tax. This plan assists the staff in maintaining high standards of services, thereby increasing the duty, responsibility and self-respect. Therefore, standards are mile posts of progress. They are so numerous in commerce, industry and especially in education that, we are hardly aware of them. Due to lack of awareness, hardly libraries follow the standards in different activities and services.

The standards are the most workable and practicable, provided the librarians understand and are seriously interested to improve the quality of the library services, for which they have responsibility. Library services are needed in order to serve all people adequately regardless of where they live. The idea of universal good library services through systems to serve all the people is the heart of the library standards. The library standards constitute both for the research and services available within the local community. They are standards, available worldwide to study the needs of the library and ultimately to judge the institution. A standard is a document, which provides requirements, specifications, guidelines or characteristics that can be used consistently to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purposes

2.0 HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE IN INDIA

The following chronological order provides a clear picture about the history of education in library & information science in India.

- 1946: Full-fledged Deptt of Lib. Sc. Started at D.U.
- 1947: P.G.Diploma couse started in D.U.
- 1948: University of Delhi instituted Bachelor's

Degree in lib.sc.

- 1949: Two-year M.Lib.Sc. Degree was introduced replacing Bachelor's degree
- 1951: University of Delhi introduced Doctoral study in Library Science
- 1957: First Ph.D awarded to D.B. Krishna Rao under the guidance of S. R. Ranganathan
- 1959:Glossory cataloguing terms-BIS-Ranganathan
- 1964: INSDOC(now NISCAIR) started one year P.G. course in Documentation and Reprography leading to award of Associateship in Documentation and Reprography
- 1978: University of Delhi introduced M.Phil in Library Science

Similarly when we come across the following chronological table, this shows that, Indian standards existence since 1959.

- IS: 796: 1959 Indian standard – Glossary of cataloguing terms was adopted by the ISI on 3rd June 1959. Revised in 1996.
- IS: 1358:1959 Indian standard – Practice for layout of library catalogue code. Revised in 1967.
- IS2550:1963 Glossary of classification terms.
- IS796:1966 Glossary of cataloguing terms. And so on.

In spite of the above facts, the library professionals in India are hardly aware of the existence of library standards.

3.0 NEED FOR STANDARDS

- By using standards, the performance of the libraries can be measured,
- While surveying, one can know where his/her library stands.
- Use of standards helps in developing future standards by correcting the discrepancies that will be found between standards and actual performance.
- This provides good library services.
- Helps in enhancing the library budgets.
- Helps in finding out library needs.
- Helps the librarians to make plans/decisions in a way to contribute directly towards raising the real quality of services leading to an effective tool for librarians
- Standards are the best guides in trying to improve library services.
- Standards are useful in all the in-house activities of the library

4.0 AIMS OF STANDARDS

- Economy of cost, human effort and essential materials
- Compatibility
- Solutions to recurring problems
- Quality definitions and evaluations
- Variety rationalisation
- Interchangeability
- Fitness of purpose
- Safety, health & environmental protection
- Removal of Trade Barriers

5.0 PRINCIPLES OF STANDARD FORMULATION

Standards are formulated

- Based on principle of consensus amongst all involved
- Involving all stakeholders
- Voluntary unless made obligatory through a contract or by Govt.
- Voluntary commitment in the preparation and their use
- Intended application of standard should be clearly understood
- Verification of compliance with specified requirements should be possible within reasonable time and cost
- Written in simple and clear way

6.0 LEVELS OF STANDARDIZATION:

The levels of standards can be International, National, Association, Company and Individual. Here only the international and national level standards are under discussion.

6.1 International level:

The aim of international level standards is to develop standards pertaining to International level, to facilitate international exchange of goods and services and to develop mutual cooperation in the spheres of intellectual, scientific, technological and economic activity .International standards aim to achieve to develop standards, prefer ideal solution to national practices. Failing the above, coordinate national standards on the basis of worldwide economy and emphasise technological and economic needs.

International standards bring technological, economic and social benefits. They help to harmonise technical specification of products and services making industry more efficient and breaking down barriers to international trade. ISO has developed materials describing the economic and social benefits of standards. International standards are tools and guidelines to help companies tackle some of the most demanding challenges of modern business. The benefits of international standards include cost savings, enhanced customer satisfaction, access to new markets, increased market share and environmental benefits. ISO has over 19,000

standards touching almost all aspects of life. ISO standards draw on international expertise and experience and are therefore a vital resource for Govt. when developing public policy. ISO management system standards provide a model to follow while setting up and operating a management system. There standards can be applied to any organisation, large or small, whatever the product or service and regardless of the sector of activity.

6.2 National level:

- National level standard aims at development of national level standardisation and to facilitate industry-wide exchange of goods and services,
- To promote national standardization and to develop mutual cooperation in the spheres of technological and economic activity.
- Prefer ideal solution to industry practices
- Failing the above, co-ordinate association standards on basis of nationwide economy
- Emphasize technological and economic needs; and
- Align with international standards

The standards are designed to fit to the aims and needs of the institution of which library is a part. The structure and governance of the library is also standardised with respect to library policies and procedures and the desirability of a faculty library committee, which functions in an advisory capacity. After discussing about the library holding, size of the faculty and students, variety and spread of subject fields covered etc. helps in hiking the budget. Use of standards also help in improving the staff position, library collection, audio-video materials administrated by the library, discarding of obsolete and other useless materials, recommending open shelves, recommending adequate and appropriate space, equipments and seating capacity, quality of service and its evaluation, interlibrary co-operation.

6.2.1 Need of National Level Standards:

Whenever we think of standards, we jump to the numerical standards such as number of books per capita, hours open, and computer workstations. But it is very important to have prescriptive standards. Theoretically, one might say that if a library does not meet minimum standards, it can be called a reading room or a coffee shop with books but not a public/special/academic library. During the planning process of the library, it is not required to have by-laws for the same. They are simply necessary. Similarly use of standards, also simply necessary and they are necessary nationally. Minimum standards should be used by each and every library. Minimum standards get some attention and lip service. Therefore, BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) took birth in the year 1947 as a registered society under GOI as Indian Standards Institutions (ISI). In 1986, BIS act was passed and w.e.f. 1st April, 1987 newly formed BIS came into existence.

7.0 INDIAN STANDARDS AVAILABLE ON LIBRARY SERVICES

Library is the communication link between the authors, publishers and readers. Library also serves as an important link between the standards and end-users. We have a number of management system standards, each focusing on different issues affecting global business. More information can be found under energy management, environmental management, quality management, fire safety management, information security management, sustainable events managements, occupational health and safety management etc. MSD-5 stands for Documentation and Information Sectional Committee under Management Systems Division. BIS has developed some standards through different panels of MSD-5. The housekeeping operations of a library are performed by the library staff. It is essential to acquaint with essential routines and operations performed in various types of libraries (academic/govt./special/public) for providing effective services. Collection Development (acquisition section), processing of documents (technical section), circulation control system (circulation section) serials control section (journals section), maintenance section, computerisation section are different sections of a library. For effective management of these sections, workflow is determined. Similarly in order to bring uniformity and standardisation, national standards are developed to fit the local situation. Some of the standards developed/adopted by BIS is mentioned below for proper understanding:

7.1 Work-flow in Acquisition Section:

- Selection of books
- Duplication Checking
- Placing the order of selected books
- Passing the bills
- Accessioning

7.1.1 Standards available:

- IS8310:2006/ISO2108:2005 - Information & documentation –International standard book number **(ISBN)** (second revision).

- IS10101:2012/ISO3297:2007 - Information & documentation - International standard serial number **(ISSN)** (second revision).
- MSD5 (410) - Information & documentation - International standard music number **(ISMN**).

7.2 Work-flow in Technical Section:

- Classification of books
- Cataloguing of books
- Physical processing of books
- Release of the books
- Generating barcodes

7.2.1 Standards available:

- IS18:1999/ ISO4:1997 Information & documentation- Rules for the abbreviation of title words and titles of publications (third revision).
- IS796:1966 Glossary of cataloguing terms (first revision).
- IS1358:1967 Practice for layout of library catalogue code (first revision).
- IS2550:1963 Glossary of classification terms.
- IS 7150:1974 Specification for library catalogue and abstract card.
- IS 15283:2003 Layout of an entry in a union catalogue of periodicals publication.
- IS15390:2003/ ISO23950:1998 Information retrieval (Z39.50)- Application service definition and protocol specification.
- IS 165000:201 Devnagri lipi tatha Hindi vartani.

7.3 Work-flow in Circulation section

- Membership Registration
- Issue/return, ILL, Reservation, Renewal, Reminder, Recall
- No Demand Certificate
- Collection of Over Due Charges
- Photocopy
- Interlibrary Loan

7.3.1 Standards available:

- MSD5(407)/ ISO2146:2010 Information and documentation – Registry services for libraries and related organizations.
- MSD5(411)/ISO15511:2009 Information and documentation- International standard identifier for libraries and related organisation (ISIL).

7.4 Work-flow in Journals Section:

- Approval, order, receipt of journals/newspapers/magazines
- Entry in the Kardex and Library software
- Passing of bills
- Binding & Accessioning of journals

7.4.1 Standards available:

- IS6666:2007 Recommendations for frequency notation for periodical publications (first revision).
- IS15282:2003 Entries in a directory of periodicals.
- IS10101:2012/ ISO3297:2007 Information & documentation - International standard serial number (ISSN) (second revision).

7.5 Maintenance Section:

- Books shelved/rectified
- Binding of books/journals
- Withdrawal/weeding out of books
- Shelving of books
- Putting shelf guides/Bay guides
- Binding of library books
- Preservation of books
- Environmental factors,
  - Biological factors,
  - Chemical factors,
  - Human factors,
  - Disasters.

7.5.1 Standards available:

- IS3083:1985 Code of practice for the processing of micro transparencies (microfilms and microfiche (silver halide) (Second Revision).
- IS3130:1985 Code of practice for handling and storage of micro transparencies (microfilm and microfiche) (silver halide) (second revision).
- IS6299:1971 Guide for handling, testing and storage of monochrome photographic prints.
- IS12879 (part I): 2012/ ISO3272-1:2003 Microfilming of technical drawings and other drawings office documents: part I Operating procedures (first revision).
- IS12879 (part2): 1999/ ISO 3272-2:1994 Microfilming of technical drawings and other drawings office documents: part2 Quality criteria and control of 35mm silver gelatin microfilms (first revision).
- IS12879 (part3):2004/ ISO3272-3:2001 Microfilming of technical drawings and other drawings office documents: part3 Aperture card for 35mm microfilm (first revision).
- IS12879 (part4): 1999/ ISO 3272-4:1994 Microfilming of technical drawings and other drawing office documents: part4 Microfilming of drawings of special and exceptional elongated sizes.

7.6 Computerisation Sections:

- Data entry of books in the acquisition

module
- Data entry of journals in the serials module
- Computerised memberships card & issue/return
- Dissemination of information products
- Online Public Access Catalogue
- Digitisation
- Website management

The ultimate aim of all the above sections is to cater effective library services to its readers. Therefore, services like orientation to fresher's, orientation to group visitors, meeting reference queries, compilation of bibliography (subject annotated), indexing services, abstracting services, CAS- (press clippings, book review, current contents, new arrivals), SDI (user profile and document profile), document delivery services, e-mail service, SMS service etc.

7.6.0 Standards available:

- IS382:2003 Practice for alphabetical arrangement (first revision).
- IS2381 (part1):2009/ISO690:1987 Information & documentation- Bibliographic references: part 1 Content, form and structures (second revision).
- IS2381 (part2):2009/ISO690-2:1997 Information & documentation- Bibliographic references: part 2 Electronic documents or parts thereof (second revision).
- IS9400:1980 Guide for preparation of bibliographic description sheet for technical reports.
- IS795:2013 Guide for preparation of abstracts (second revision).
- IS1275:1976 Rules for making alphabetical indexes (first revision).
- IS10454:1983/ ISO2384:1977 Guidelines for presentation of translations
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- IS15389:2003/ ISO17933:2000 GEDI- Generic electronic document interchange.
- IS15991:2012/ ISO8459:2009 Information & documentation- Bibliographic data element directory for use in data exchange and enquiry.
- IS15992:2012/ ISO15836:2009 Information & documentation- The Dublin core meta data element set.
- IS15993:2012/ ISO20775:2009 Information & documentation- Schema for holding information.
- IS15994 (part1):2012/ ISO23081-1:2006 Information & documentation- Records management processes- Metadata for records – part1: principles.
- IS15994 (part2):2012/ ISO23081-2:2009 Information & documentation- Records management processes- Metadata for records – part2: Conceptual and implementation issues

Management of the institution would like to know how well the institutional library is working for which it is very important for the library to put statistical data in the annual report.

Statistics of library can be used to measure efficiency of different sections or individuals for planning of library services. If a service is in heavy demand, it can be started or improved. Services which are not being utilized can be stopped, to prepare a case for increase of funds and staff, to present to users and management about the achievements of the library, statistics of circulation and volume of reference and consultation can be used to justify the losses, statistics are extremely useful in planning the library activities. As statistical data can lend itself to misinterpretation, it should be used with care and in the light of other background information.

The needs for statistics will differ from library to library. Statistics is not an end in itself but a means to an end. Therefore, BIS has also developed a standard in which statistics pertaining to different sections can be provided to make the activities and services visible in the annual report of the institution.

8.0 CONCLUSION

BIS is committed to facilitate "Make in India" through quality standards. The issue of standards is extremely relevant in the present day context of fast industrialisation and globalisation. Quality plays a major role in all walks of life. Therefore, standards are to the industry as culture is to society. In the 20th century the importance of standardisation is well understood as a means of organizing industry to manufacture materials that adhered to benchmark of specifications and quality control. The railway was the first organisation to recognise the need for

developing new standard designs and specifications. With a view to accommodate all legitimate interests of stakeholders through consensus BIS fosters a harmonious spirit in its functioning by evolving procedures for formulation of national standards. Indian standards are formulated through technical committees grouped under division councils keeping in view national priorities, industrial development, technical needs, export promotion, consumer health, safety and efficient library management. Therefore, it is the first and foremost duty and responsibility of the library professionals is to know about the existence of library standards, which can be possible by wide circulation by BIS. By use of the library standards, efficient services can be provided. In order to promote Indian trade interests in global markets, it is important to harmonise Indian standards with international standards formulated by ISO. Wide use of library standards can contribute to fulfill the aim of MSD-5 of BIS. Primary benefits of an effective management system include, increased customer satisfaction, efficient use of resources, improvement in efficiency of service delivery and quality of products. Therefore, understanding the usefulness of library standards, it can be said that, the standards are the tools for effective management of libraries and information centres.

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