PRESS CLIPPING SERVICE AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH LIBRARY

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Describes the importance of Press Cutting Service in an agricultural research library. Also deals with the procedure of selecting news release from six leading newspapers of India and their systematic arrangement as per Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme. Suggests for introducing the service in all special libraries.

1. INTRODUCTION

Information is the fifth need of man ranking after air, water, food and shelter[1]. The information in a specific field of knowledge may be disseminated to the needy with the help of any media both micro- and macro- in any form both conventional such as newspapers, periodicals, books, etc. and nonconventional such as micro-films, micro-cards, microfiche, computer tapes, film-rolls, etc. The value of information is time-bound. Information loses its value with the passing of time. No doubt newspaper gives information in any field of knowledge, even if the information is in embryo-stage, in a form which can be understood by people in all walks of life. That is why newspapers may be considered as popular mass media. As the universe of information is ever growing in many dimensions any standard newspaper can not cover all information at a time. In the present study an endeavour is made to scan information only in agriculture and allied fields to cater to the needs of agricultural scientists.

2. MATERIAL

Agricultural scientists in different fields such as Agronomy, Plant Breeding, Plant Diseases, Horticulture, Livestock Production, Health, Nutrition, etc. were consulted individually and their needs in respective fields were assessed pinpointedly so as to collect the important and relevant press releases. To make the endeavour effective, questionnaires consisting of five questions were circulated among agricultural scientists from S to S3-level doing research in Head Quarters located in Shillong (Meghalaya). Out of 50 (fifty) questionnaires circulated among them, 30 (thirty) were received in time. On analysing their answers it was concluded that a systematic Press Cutting Service would be very useful.

With a view to cover maximum news releases both from Indian and Foreign origin, six leading newspapers of India, namely, (i) Amrita Bazar Patrika (Calcutta), (ii) Assam Tribune (Gauhati), (iii) Economic Times (Calcutta), (iv) News Star (Gauhati), (v) Statesman (Calcutta) and (vi) Times of India (New Delhi) were selected as sources of all discursive and non-discursive information at any stage of their development[2].

3. METHOD

All the six selected newspapers were being scanned daily for half an hour from 10 to 10:30 a.m. The selected items were marked and sent to the Technical Section. The Technical Staff fixed for the purpose would cut out the items without damaging the whole newspaper and paste them on sheets of thick papers. The classifier classified the news releases as per Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme. To maintain uniformity in size, shape, etc., one stencil for each newspaper was cut mentioning on the top of it the title of newspaper, place of publication, date of publication and broad Dewey Decimal Class Number. Duplicating papers used were of same size. The size of each duplicating paper, space for typed items, space for pasted material etc. are shown in Figure 1.
TABLE NO 1

300 - SOCIAL SCIENCES
330 - ECONOMICS
620 - AGRICULTURE AND RELATED TECHNOLOGIES
621 - GENERAL AGRICULTURAL TECHNIQUES, APPARATUS, EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS.
632 - PLANT INJURIES DISEASES PESTS
633 - FIELD CROPS

634 - ORCHARDS FRUITS FORESTRY
635 - GARDEN CROPS (HORTICULTURE) VEGETABLES
636 - ANIMAL HUSBANDRY
637 - DAIRY AND RELATED TECHNOLOGIES
638 - INSECT CULTURE
639 - NON DOMESTICATED ANIMALS AND PLANTS

FIGURE NO. 2

ARCH FILE
For the proper maintenance and systematic arrangement of clippings, similar type of "Arch-Files" having punch-clipping facilities were used. Selected news releases were restricted to 12 (twelve) broad classes as per DDC Scheme. Details are shown in Table Number 1. One Arch File was fixed for one Class Number which was written on the top of the spine with the name of the respective subject class. In the middle of each spine, date, month and year of origin were clearly written. At the bottom, name of the library and full address of the institute in capital letters were written. These are illustrated in Figure 2. Clippings bearing the class number were arranged in one Arch-File chronologically. All the Arch-Files were arranged as per Class Numbers and were kept in the "Popular Reading Circle".

4. DISCUSSION

The whole gamut of activities concerned with Press Cutting Service included techniques of information dissemination and communication and the whole range of activities centred around promotion and utilization of news releases in an effective way. As the scientists were aware of the Press Cutting Service rendered by the Library, whenever they visited the library they first went through clippings pertaining to their field of interests. On many occasions they would note down relevant information in their field diary. It was observed that they sometime discussed among themselves on some points outside the reading room. They demanded photo copies for some of the controversial news releases. As time passed the demand for Press Cutting Service increased by leaps and bounds. Not only the scientists of the Institute were benefitted but also the readers coming from other institutes were also using the clippings with utmost interest. Some of the users suggested that clippings in political developments in and outside India, strategic importance of the Indian Ocean, and space research and its different stages of development might be maintained along with other clippings.

5. CONCLUSION

The Press Cutting Service in any special library plays a vital role like Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Current Contents Service, Book Alert Service, etc. The outcome of the service conclusively indicates that there is a need for introducing this service in special library of any area of knowledge. The person selected for the job must have thorough knowledge about the needs of the information uses. He should not select such news releases which may create unnecessary noise among the useful clippings and destroy the very objective of the service. Though the users are very limited yet any special library should introduce this service along with other services.

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7. REFERENCES
