

Library “WOW”! Planning Orientation for Marketing Academic Libraries

Thusithakumari, W.M. and Jayawardana, K.G.I.

thusithak@wyb.ac.lk, gayankgi@gmail.com

Abstract

Wayamba University Library Network (WULN) leads a four - week orientation programme at the beginning of each new academic semester to open minds eye of fresher’s introduced as the Weeks of Welcome (WOW). Creating positive perceptions of academic libraries new student orientations provide as ideal opportunity to be more innovative and proactive in marketing of library resources and services. Currently the academic libraries are become to hybrid libraries and to familiarize the academic learning environment in e-information era. This study investigated the advancements of orientation programmes effect for marketing academic libraries. To find out the factors that influenced marketing of academic libraries through the orientation programmes was the other objective. A survey research method was applied for the study and two questionnaires (pre & post), group interviews and observations were used as data collection instruments. The population consists of 555 new students who attend and the complete programme. Based on the views as part of the new students orientation, scheduled to showcase the Wayamba University Library services, spaces and collections while having a lot of fun. The involvement in orientation had gone through many events which embraced the students: music, games, snacks and library services, library tour, video, creative activities, awarding gifts presented step-by-step guided over 500 participants. According to the results, the librarians were satisfied with strategies followed making attraction to the event, First year Experience (FYE) is better than First Year Instruction (FYI). The inadequate space, computers, large student groups (around 70 heads), time constraints and other university activities were identified as factors influenced on the library orientation. The study recommended to the orientation programme should be provided specific space and more time for the awareness programmes and should be Increased the number of computers for more accessibility of e-resources too. The fun activities based on library resources and services, library tour, snacks and gifts were very important to marketing academic libraries among new comers of the universities. Thereby we had a great new group of library enthusiasts.

Keywords: *Academic libraries, Academic library services, Library orientation programme, Marketing academic libraries, Planning library orientation programmes*