BEST PRACTICES AND QUALITY TO LIBRARY SERVICES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.7161951

Abstract:

The paper discusses various best practices to develop quality library services in academic libraries. Best practices are solving the problems of library users to effective use of library resources. Quality services improved the activities of the library. The library has to design a system that can deliver its product and services to attract more users. The library plays a key role in supporting academic activities by establishing, maintaining, and promoting Information Services. In this regard, there are several steps to improve the quality of the information provided to the students and faculty members for enhancing their knowledge and skills and also support research activities. The effectiveness of the services through automation and some 'Best Practices' are also mentioned in this paper by which libraries can achieve their goals.

Keywords: Quality enhancement, best practices, Academic library, user education, ICT.

Introduction:

The best practice is to yield optimum results in a given field. It gives benefits in direct or indirect form to the organizations. The present information and communication technology (ICT) has made a tremendous impact on the functions of academic libraries. The development and changes in ICT have changed the user's expectations of academic libraries in different ways. Hence to effectively meet the demands of the end-users the academic libraries need to identify and adopt good and best practices. At present days there is an explosion of information hence libraries have to play an important role to support the end users of the academic library by providing quality library services.

The primary function of libraries is to create awareness and initiate the students to feel the library is an integral part of their academic career. The main role of the library is to support the academic programs offered and the curriculum requirements of its users. Now a days the traditional concept of libraries which was completely based on print media is changed to the electronic form or digital form with the help of information technology. Using such best practices which are given by the academic libraries should provide the user education for effective use of such services. Quality

services have very important for improved library customer's satisfaction.

Definition of Best Practices:
Best practices are defined as:

ODLIS (online Dictionary of Library and Information) describes best practices as follows: "In the application of theory to real-life situation procedures that, when properly applied consistently yield superior results and are therefore used as reference points in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the alternative method of accomplishing the same task."

"A best practice is a standard or set of guidelines that are known to produce good outcomes if followed."
https://www.techtarget.com/searchsoftwarequality/definition/best-practice

Meaning of Best Practices and Qualitative Library Services:

Best practices are simply the best ways to perform a specific business, function, or process, such as developing or marketing a product. They are performance standards that others seek to emulate unlike a developing theory, idea, or trend; best practices have been proven to return desirable results. Librarians can enhance their service offerings by helping their customers access best practices information and use it to drive innovation similarly, they can leverage best practices to achieve internal improvements.

Best Practices for Academic Library:

The best practices can enhance the academic information environment and usage. Listed below are some of the best practices for the academic library.

1. Library automation with standard software:

Library automation is the application of computers and utilization of computer-based products and services in the performance of different library operations and functions in the provision of various services and production of output products. Automation is a technology of automatic working in which the handling method, the process, and the design of professional material are integrated. Library automation may be defined as the application of automatic and semiautomatic data processing machines (Computers) to perform traditional library housekeeping activities such as acquisition, circulation, cataloging, and reference and serials control.

2. Collection Development (Print and Non-print material):

The collection should be based on the day-to-day needs of the users. The suggestion file has been made available in the library. Heads of concern departments and Teaching staff members can suggest titles of their choice. Create all related databases such as suppliers list, publishers list, budget availability, etc. The goal of the practice is to build a good collection with not only print but also non-print digital material.

3. Book Display Programme:

Organize exhibitions and book display programs on important dates and important occasions for eminent personalities. This helps and provides an opportunity for users to know the various types of information resources available in a particular aspect of the library. Displaying new arrivals on the notice board and circulating a list of new arrivals to the concerned department.

4. Inter Library Loan:

Share the knowledge resources in groups or organizations together. It can help our users and optimum use of available learning resources through the existing facility and available reading

material. Co-operation and coordination have been established between the academic libraries of local and other institutions to increase the use of library resources.

5. Electronic Document Delivery Service:

The library is delivering documents to its user. The library can also develop the process to deliver digital documents also. Develop the system and programs to deliver online documents to users. This will be the best option for the readers to find specific information.

6. Displaying Newspaper clippings on the Notice board periodically:

Important and relevant information on various subjects including career & Development announcements published will be displayed on the library notice board regularly for the use of students and faculty. Newspaper clippings are provided for different subject areas. Separate files can be maintained for each subject. Education, career, scholarship, health, current issues etc. related articles will be displayed on the notice board regularly.

7. Book Exhibition on different Occasions:

Organize exhibitions and book display programs on important dates and important occasions for eminent personalities. This helps and provides an opportunity for users to know the various types of information resources available in a particular aspect of the library.

8. Organizing Book Talks:

A book talk in the broadest terms is what is spoken with the intent to convince someone to read a book. The purpose of a book talk is to motivate listeners to foster good reading, writing, and speaking skills by encouraging self-directed learning through reading. Book talks are traditionally conducted in a classroom setting for students. However, book talks can be performed outside a College setting and with a variety of age groups as well. It is not a book review or a book report or a book analysis. The book talker gives the audience a glimpse of the setting, the characters, and/or the major conflict without providing a resolution or denouement.

9. User Awareness and Training Programme:

Users benefited from the various resources available in the library and also hands-on training in searching Journals, catalogs, OPAC, information literacy, and Database to help users and increase the use of library resources after the training program.

10. Reprography:

Provide reprographic service to the user with maintaining the copyright act. Many academic libraries provide photo-copying facilities to the students and teachers at almost no profit no loss basis. It can be benefited the to user read the material at the available time and place.

11. Creation of Home Page, Blog, Web Page of Library:

Creation of a Home page for the library to provide information about Brief History of the Library, rules and regulations, timings, services provided, and details about the staff working. The Home Page provides a link to the Digital Library Containing a rare collection of Journals and databases. services, rules, forms, etc. This is informative and useful for users. Take care of updating and maintaining web pages and blogs also. This is very useful for users.

12. Guiding researchers to develop good data collection:

The researchers are willing to do research and visit the library to find different areas in their area of interest. The

practice is helped by guiding and showing the way to select research topics from various available resources for students. It will save time, money, and energy to avoid duplication and select the topic. Further, the researchers already working on their topic get related literature work to complete the study easily.

13. Conducting User Surveys Periodically:

Conducting periodic surveys to understand how users view

services, spaces, and materials, and how satisfied with the overall library experience. By conducting a user survey we can improve the services of the library.

14. Downloading facility for previous University Examination Question Papers from College Library Website :

The student gets an opportunity to prepare for the examination by making use of these oft-repeated questions which also would enhance the confidence level of the examination. Previous year exam Question paper helps students for preparation of their examination. Collecting the previous year's question papers from From previous year's students is a very difficult task while it is available on the college library website student can easily get it.

15. Annual Best User Award for Students:

Best Library Reader awards to the students who read books and utilize other library resources at a maximum in the most effective manner. The awards can distribute at the Annual Day function every year. This activity can motivate other students to use the library.

16. Separate library for each Department:

A Departmental Library may be defined as a subject collection in an academic institution, housed either in a separate room of the Main Library or in some building outside the main Library and administered either as a part of a centralized Library system or as a part of the academic department it serves.

17. Book Bank Facility:

This model has been in vogue for quite a long time. The students make use of this facility for the day-to-day preparation of lessons. The books which are earmarked under various titles are issued to the beneficiaries from time to time., which can be kept as study tools for a stipulated period. Besides regular library facilities, every semester the library issues sets of textbooks to students for a whole semester. They can issue at most Five books from the book-bank Facility. The textbooks are mainly emphasized for this section.

18. Special Collection of Books for Competitive Exams:

This facility is useful for the student those who are preparing for competitive exams. A specific collection of books on the competitive exam can help students who are preparing for civil services exams with their academic studies.

19. Providing a soft copy of some textbooks & Study materials for students based on copy write conditions:

In addition to the full-fledged study materials made available to the students through the library, the students are also provided a soft copy of some textbooks or abridged versions of study materials for hands-on reference. Students generally heave a sigh of relief at the possession of these notes as they can ensure last-minute preparation. Nowadays providing a soft copy of some textbook and study materials for a student based on copyright conditions is very demanding.

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20. Suggestions Box for users:

User feedback is collected on all aspects of library services formally through suggestion boxes, feedback forms, and library services evaluation forms. Helps in collection development. Changes and improvements in facilities and services. The library is a service center to support the teaching, learning, and research needs of the users. Apart from providing regular and routine services, it is necessary to provide new and improved services. A feedback box near the entry point of the library. The Reader Services Section to open this box regularly to take decisions at their level or a staff meeting based on the issues. Regularly scheduled meetings of Department Heads to discuss the issues.

21. Internet Facilities to User Groups:

One of the most important roles libraries play in students, researchers and faculty are providing access to information. Access to current and comprehensive information is important to improve teaching and learning activities. Large numbers of resources are available on the web and students need to be provided with the required facility to access the same. A browsing unit with five computers with internet connectivity is created for free use by the students during working hours. Librarians and senior faculty members are guiding them in searching for relevant topics and also taking printouts. Students are well informed about the e-resources and they are permitted to use the facility only for academic purposes. Students are benefited from getting current information.

22. Web-Based Services:

The libraries can provide various web-based services through its strong library website updated with services such as virtual tours, virtual references desk, ask the librarian, full-text article, help desk, lecture notes, electronic announcements, e-books, and digital suggestion box. project reports, frequently asked questions, dissertations. Some of the commonly used web-based library services are library webpage, web OPAC, Bulletin Board Services, Ask-a-Librarian services, web forms, digital reference services, online document delivery, interlibrary loan, online help, and information skill tutorials, online current awareness bulletins, e-mail based, etc.

23. Earn and Learn Scheme:

Some library work is made available to students and completes some work by getting the assistance of the student. Earn while learn scheme serves a dual purpose of helping the students by paying them as per the quantum of work and increasing student's participation in library work.

24. Extended library opening hours:

This aims to provide uninterrupted reading facilities to the users in a conducive atmosphere. Those who can't visit the library during the daytime can make use of the Library in the evening hours.

Conclusion:

Best practices and qualitative library services in academic libraries are very useful to provide academic support to the student and faculty members of the institute. The library should identify and develop its own best practice and qualitative library services according to its users. By implementation of best practices and qualitative library services in the library leads to continuous improvement in the overall performance of the library and helps to achieve the goals of the library. It also helps to improve the teaching and learning activities of the institute. Overall

Best Practice and Qualitative Library Services increase the performance of the library.

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