

Best Practices of Library and Information Centre: A Case Study of the Standard Fireworks Rajaratnam College for Women, Sivakasi

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Abstract- Academic libraries perform a significant role in the delivery of services and resources. The UGC-NAAC has defined the best practices in libraries, to evolve library with better quality. Recent days the library and information centers role has changed. In this connection, this paper briefs about the best practices in the Standard Fireworks Rajaratnam College for Women, Sivakasi. The purpose of this paper is to explain how the academic library meets with the user's expectations and needs through innovative library services.

Keywords: best practices, library and information center, innovation, collection development, library services, users expectations, college library, academic library, library quality, quality services

I. INTRODUCTION

The main function of academic library is to support the users in identifying and accessing the resources for research and academic purpose. The academic libraries are involved in the activities related to the development of library's vision, mission, goals and policies of the library, working hours, stock verification methods, copyright issues, membership, budgeting and reporting, resource mobilization, technical processing methods, manpower development, collection development, technical services, information services generation, technological, legal and copy right issues, etc. It also concerns with strategic planning of LIS in present and future operations. Identifying and internalization of best practices in the management and administrative functions at regular intervals would enhance the collection of development process, services dissemination and use of the library as a whole. Active participation in the periodic meetings of library advisory committee, involvement of librarian in the academic activities of the college/university, support from the management, participation of the users, standard facilities with innovative library buildings, regular flow of resource generation, skilled and qualified staff deployment with training, capacity building in terms of information and communication technology, information dissemination facilities etc.,

II. BEST PRACTICES FOR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

Listed below are some of the best practices that can enhance the academic information environment and usability. 1. Computerization of library with standard digital software. 2.

Inclusion of sufficient information about the library in the college prospectus. 3. Compiling student/teacher attendance statistics and locating the same on the notice board. 4. Displaying newspaper clippings on the notice board periodically. 5. Career/Employment Information/ Services. 6. Internet Facilities to different user groups. 7. Information literacy programs. 8. Suggestion box and timely response. 9. Displaying new arrivals and circulating a list of those to academic departments. 10. Conducting book exhibitions on different occasions. 11. Organizing book stalls. 12. Instituting best User award for student's every year. 13. Organizing competitions annually. 14. Conducting user surveys periodically.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tiwari, K. (2016) examined the innovative approach to library services of technical university libraries in India. The study found that, the library users can get maximum satisfaction and attraction through innovative way of library services and providing innovate services are more significant than heavy advertisements. This study recommends that the library service innovations can help the purpose of advanced teaching and learning.

Sathe, V. S. (2015) revealed that the best practices will help to improve the library service quality. In the mean time, the best practice improves users' maximum utilization of the library resources.

Panneerselvam, P. (2014) says that the Library and information centers should adopt new ideas and methodologies, which can offer new services to the users, will always yield good results. The library needs to adapt innovative ideas to impress the users, which can facilitate them to use library collections. Library and information centers can take the advantages of ICT by which it can offer right information at right time.

IV. SFRC FOR WOMEN

The Standard Fireworks Rajaratnam College for Women's aims to provide quality education to rural women from different socio- economic and cultural background of Sivakasi area. They have chalked out courses and programmes for the dawn of bright higher education and

intellectual upliftment of rural women in and around Sivakasi by generating funds to "The Standard Fireworks Educational Charities Trust". The students admire the quality teaching methods, research and infrastructure available in the college. The college is offering interdisciplinary degrees in arts and science which has enriched knowledge across the globe. It is one of the pioneer Institutes in Sivakasi area and offers UG, PG and Ph.D. programmes approved by AICTE and accredited by the National Board of Accreditation.

V. SFRC- IRC INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE

The SFRC Library called as Information Resource Centre is located at heart of the institution. The information center aims to provide effective access for academic and research purpose, provides updated information on core subject and highest level of satisfaction. It is designed to meet the academic and research needs of the users community. It provides access to various information resources stretching to latest books, textbooks and audio-visual materials for core subjects. It's prompt and effective services are in sync with the changing needs of the academic community which is moving towards the electronic resources such as databases, e-books and e-journals.

VI. BEST PRACTICES AT IRC

Quality Resources: recent days most of the academic institutions are giving more importance to the library and every year they are spending huge amount on library resources. The librarians should evaluate whether they are adding a quality collection to their library or not. Library can avoid the duplicate titles and procure the latest, updated and research oriented resources. These can be added as per the institution's core subject.

VII. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

For collection development, the library professionals should closely interact with the user community. It helps, the library can develop their collection based on their user interest. However, the resources can be found out from various sources like, browsing the Publishers Catalogue, reputed institutions catalogue, suggestions from user community, conducting book fair and circulating the bibliographical details to the user community in regular interval.

IRC maintains the quality in print materials procurement and follow the single title system. The single title system guides to maintain the quality resources and avoiding the duplication in overall collections. Based on the resource usage, the library will take initiative to procure the additional volumes for the particular title. As of now the library has 58,168 volumes, 32,580 titles. The library has a policy to add minimum 1000 volumes in their overall collection by every academic year.

A. Collection Development channels are,

1. Publishers Catalogue: Quarterly ones: The publisher's catalogues will be circulated to the user community (Students & Faculty) and user community will randomly select the books.
2. Book Fair: Every year in the month of August to October, the IRC will organize a book fair and the books are directly selected by the faculty and students.
3. Suggestions from Faculty & Students: The students and faculty will suggest the books to the library, through library books and suggestion forms.
4. Publisher Website & Online Book Stores: The library professionals keep track of the books through online books stores and new additions will be added in our collections immediately.
5. Academic Library Catalogue: The library professionals do search with reputed colleges and Universities library catalogue and suggest to the management about the non-availability in their collection on regular basis.

VIII. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT FOR PERIODICALS

IRC maintains the quality in periodical collections also. IRC subscribes the periodicals, based on the academic expert's recommendations. The periodicals mainly focused on research and academic oriented. As of now the IRC has 107 Research and academic related collections in periodicals section.

Selection of Periodicals as follows

1. Publishers Catalogue: Every year, before subscribing for periodicals, the IRC will circulate the publisher's catalogue to the Faculty (domain wise). Based on the faculty recommendations the subscription of periodical will start.
2. Suggestions from Faculty & Students: The faculty and students can suggest the periodicals based on their domain/interest.

IX. REFERENCE MATERIALS

The IRC maintains high quality reference materials for the academic user groups. It covers special reference books, Case Studies and Project Reports. The Project reports are included by students through Summer Internship Programme (SIP) and Final year Project reports.

X. AUDIO VISUAL RESOURCES

The IRC took some initiative for this special collection for our entire user community. This collection is classified by Educational Movies, Motivational Movies, Book companied CD's.

XI. ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

IRC has huge collection in electronic formats and subscribes two research based databases. These databases are classified domain wise. The IRC initiated and has a subscription of IMF e-library database and it's free of cost to the developing countries. IRC provides the orientation based training to the users in regular intervals. The trainers are invited from the publishers and give online training.

XII. SERVICES AT IRC

1. Presentation of Physical Resources: always the library should follow the Ranganthan's fourth law "Save the Time of the User" and the resources should be arranged in proper manner. It should be arranged in such a way it is easy to locate at the time of customers' needs. The arrangement and display of the resources should attract the customer and motivate them to do visit the library regularly. Example: In the library stack area, if the books are arranged according to the classification number or any one of their library term, the user and library staff can easily locate the book immediately. Automatically the library user gets satisfied with in a minute and tries to get access to more resources. According to my opinion the library should frame the policy and provide the user's needs within the time limit.
2. Circulation: the IRC users are allowed to borrow the resources as below. If user lose or damages the library resources, the user should report to library in a stipulated time. The users should replace the resource at their own cost within 15 days. If the user fails to replace the book within the stipulated time, the library would initiate the purchase and would be charged with double the cost of the resource.
3. Reference Service: IRC will not restrict to any resources to the users. Here the reference section collections are made based on the on-going course or semester and the IRC keeps only recommended and prescribed text books for the on-going term. The reference section books keep on changing based on the term or semester.
4. Reprographic: the IRC has a high quality photocopier machine and the machine is connected with all the library computers through LAN. The users can take a photocopy of the library resources on the payment basis. The IRC strictly follows the copyright act and we are allowing them to reproduce only the document 10% of the whole book or one chapter (whichever is high).
5. Reservation & Renewal: The library users can reserve the books through our library OPAC and resources can be reserved only when they are on loan. Once the library receives the reserved book, the book availability will be notified to the particular user through online. The IRC has the policy for reservation. The reserved resource should be collected from IRC within 24 hrs after intimation. Otherwise the reservation stands cancelled and IRC will give the preference to the next user or the book will go to Stack/normal circulation. Books can be renewed twice if there is no reservation against the particular item and users can renew through email too. Once the library professionals get the email from the user, they will renew and return back to their next renewal or return date.
6. Current Awareness: IRC very effectively does this service to the user community. The library professionals keep on watching the daily newspaper, business dailies and search engines. If the library professionals identifies, the article is useful to their user community, immediately the article will be circulate through everyone's individual mail ID's. The library will keep on updating the general and business books related on daily basis.
7. Query based Services: One of the effective services of IRC is query based services to the users. The library professionals are assisting to the users through online and professionals are assisted to serve the users academic and research purpose. If users are unable to identify or retrieve the data from the subscribed databases, the users can send the mail to the IRC to find they are exactly looking for. Once the mail is received, the library professionals acknowledge their mail within 5 min. After five minutes the professional start working on the query and is served to them within 24 hrs. If the professionals may not get relevant data from their resources, they will get assistance from library professional networks.
8. Table of Content: Table of contents alerts are notified when the new issue of a journal is received. Right now this service is facilitated to faculty community only. This service save is the time and keeps update their recent development in their core area.
9. E-mail alert: The IRC created the group mail ID for faculty and students. The purpose of this service is to keep updated and share the information in timely manner like announcement of new arrivals, workshops and conference, thought for the day, day to day important news update in education sector etc.
10. Digital Library: IRC digital library uses digital technology to collect, preserve, and provide access to information, to support the research and academic mission of the SFRCW. The IRC has huge collection of e-books, e-dissertations, e-question papers etc. It is connected with our intuitional LAN and users can access theses resources within our campus.
11. Faculty publications: In archive collection, preserving, and disseminating digital copies of the intellectual output of an Institution. The IRC initiated and keeps updated this Institutional repository in regular interval and makes it available for everyone. In the meantime the IRC keep circulating the SCOPUS and Web of Science journal's list to faculty community. It's made easy to identify the right journal for the right publication.
12. Internship and Librarian's Development Programmes: The IRC provides internship for budding library

professionals every year in the month of August. During the internship, the IRC gives training in In-house operations and provides special employment based guidance. Also, IRC will conduct the Librarian's Development Programmes (LDP) on a regular basis. The LDP mainly focus on recent developments in library field and computer literacy to the library professionals.

13. Students Development Programme (SDP): IRC has taken new initiation and started the SDP from this academic year. The purpose of Students development programme is to enhance the employability skills of students, thus preparing them to face the real challenges of the world. This programme may be helpful to student's personal and professional growth opportunities.
14. Certificate Course: Every year the IRC conducts certificate courses of Library and information science for our students. Its leads to different core subject students and can enrich or make them understand the library science subject and the employment market scenario.
15. Readers club: This club aims to provide a platform for students to enhance the general, technical and scientific knowledge, including communication skills by reading and analyzing the news paper articles or any relevant current topics on daily basis, initially at class room level and later it would be extended to departmental level to college level.

XIII. CONCLUSION

Library users are playing an important role in every academic institution. If the librarians give special attention to user community, it will help the library to provide quality services to the institution as well. According to our study, the libraries never compromise on their quality in resources

and services to the user community. Because of the quality of SFRC-IRC, the library has more than 80 research scholar membership from various institutions and our institution faculty members also publish many research papers in reviewed and top ranked International Journals. SFRC students are effectively using our library resource during their Internship and final projects too.

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