

## INNOVATIVE COLLEGE LIBRARIES : AN OVERVIEW OF BEST / INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

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**Abstract :** *This paper is mainly focused on various best practices to be followed by College Libraries. The paper describes the types of innovative practices in terms of services in college libraries. This paper illustrates that the adoption of well-defined, transparent, user-focused, and technology-oriented processes and practices with the flexibility to change and improve can lead the Knowledge Resource Centre to be the best. This article will be a useful guide for other college libraries to get an idea about various methods that can be adopted in their respective libraries to render their services effective manner. Through this paper, the authors focus on the entire best practices that can be implemented by college libraries.*

**Keywords :** *Academic Libraries, Innovative Practice, Knowledge Resource Centre, NAAC.*

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### **Introduction :**

In the present age of information explosion academic libraries are facing times of unprecedented challenge and unparalleled change. And yet, academic libraries continue to operate in a climate of declining budgets and increasing costs. In such a resource-scarce environment, academic library leaders are under pressure to make wise decisions in regards to how innovations are adopted and implemented in their libraries. Academic libraries are central to the learning, teaching, and research enterprise of their institutions. The best practices help to improve the quality of library services. The best practices adopted in academic institutes should bridge the gap between library collection & user community for maximum utilization of the resources.

In the era of information explosion the libraries and information resource centre play not just an important learning-support but the library itself has been emerging as a site of learning, sometimes more important than even the class -room. Changes brought about by technology, increased user expectations and shrinking budgets have led to innovation becoming a difficult task for every knowledge Resource Centre. Innovation allows libraries to come up with new and improved services for their users.

Best/innovative practices are the best ways to perform a process, a function, or an activity that leads to a superior performance of academic libraries.

Best practices add commendable value to an institution and various stakeholders and are considered as reliable benchmarks or standards of quality. Best practices encompass the implementation of quality frameworks, and the use of benchmarking and performance measurement as tools for the continuous improvement of products, processes and services.

Best practices are the best ways to achieve development, a task, or an action that leads to better quality performance.

In the present learning scenario, it is essential to identify and adopt the new ways that will lead library and information centre to improve their process and activities, thereby optimizing the resource utilization and delivering high quality and value added services to their users.

### **Objectives :**

1. To make acquainted with best/innovative practices that can be implemented by the college library.
2. To emphasize the importance of best/innovative practices.
3. To know about the feasibility technique of best practices.

### **Why Best/innovative Practices in College Libraries ?**

Best/innovative practices are developed in the library for following purpose.

- To follow the five laws of library science.
- To consummate the need of the user.
- To become larger usage of the library.
- To trace the necessity of information of the users.
- To promote library services as a commodity.

### **Best Practices in College Libraries :**

Due to impact of IT on Higher Education, The impact of information technology on college libraries is also evident. This leads to more changes in college libraries. And as part of that, there has been a major shift in the way college libraries operate. In the age of information technology, the explosion of information has changed the nature of information needs of the readers and those needs have become multifaceted. Therefore, proper management of library and library services is a matter of time. To cope with this, college libraries need to adopt some of the best/innovative practices for providing information services using new information technology.

### **Types of Best/innovative Practices in Knowledge Resource Centre/ College Library :**

In the broad sense, there are two types of best/innovative practices i:e traditional best/innovative practices and technology-based best/innovative practices which are described as follows.

## **A. Traditional Best/innovative Practices :**

Here following are the traditional best/innovative practices which is to be adopted in College Libraries.

### **1. Book Exhibition :**

Organization of book exhibitions on various occasions to display rare books, newly added books, or books on a particular subject that are available in the library. This will assist to create awareness among readers about the asset of knowledge that is available in the library and also help further demand for the books accordingly.

### **2. New Students Orientation Programme (NSOP) :**

Orientation is one of the best practices to create awareness among the students about the library resources, services good reading habits and activities for maximum utilization of the library. The orientation helps & useful to the fresh students at the beginning of each academic year about the importance of the library, exposing the students to its various library services. Librarian should highlight his collection & services.

### **3. Library Halls :**

Library should start Library hour for students, It made compulsory for all the students by adding it in their daily class schedule. In Library hour students should visit the library for spending an hour in the library for reading materials. By keeping an hour in their time table students spend an hour in the library which brings them closer to the reading materials, indirectly it helps to increase reading habits to of students.

### **4. Current Awareness Service :**

Putting the list of newly available books and current article publishes in journals on notice board will make the reader aware about the new reading material so that accordingly he could demand for those and get it.

### **5. Staff User Meet :**

The libraries may organize activities to staff users, which involving to work and share their ideas with each other relating to the new information services and their requirements. This helps to keep abreast the staff and the users about the latest developments and trends in library profession, there by bridging the gap between the staff and users for this arrange various activities such as guest lectures, movie show etc.

### **6. Library Information Broachers:**

It is one of important primary source for creating accurateness about the facilities, services and collection of the library students can be provided the information broacher at the

time of Admission. The information brochures include information about the library facilities, like Xerox, internet etc, latest publications, latest additions to the library, non-printed information materials, book bank facilities, library rules and regulations, e-resources and online information services etc.

### **7. Library short Term course :**

The aim of this practice is to create understanding about library, use of ICT in library & to know the mechanics of library. For this library should organize a two to three days duration course for the benefit of student community. In this course, feeding of data entry for books, creating reader profiles, generating barcode & scanning the profiles, generating barcode & scanning the photo of readers etc. training should be given.

### **8. Training to use E-Resources :**

Training programmes should be conduct for student, teacher every year as per their need. In this programme, how to find out library books by using Library OPAC, use of various online database, free online journals (such as DOAJ), link to various useful websites etc. training should be given so that library resources, services use more effectively & efficiently.

### **9. Review of Book :**

User should asked to read all the book and give his review on book. At the end Librarian should collect it and displays it on notice board under the name of reviewer.

### **10. Book Talk program :**

Student should discuss on a specific book or writer which they have selected. Script reading sessions are also arranged on a specific book users also comment about books they have read.

### **11. Readers Club :**

Library should give its facility to outside reader campus. Library also establish a reader club. This club maintain good relation between library & outside users.

### **12. Interaction with Author :**

This is practical base programme which should organized by Library once in a year; for this program, Library should invites a author to interact with student. Author share his experience how to get inspiration to write a good book.

### **13. Best Library user Award :**

This practice should encourage students to make maximum use of library resources & services.

#### **14. Counseling Center Regarding Competitive Examination :-**

All of us very well know that library is soul of every educational institutes, users are also main part of library. User come to library for searching information regarding their carrier or educational development. Today competition is going on top level, students must aware of this situation. In this context Library and Librarian should play a important role to solve their problems. Library should have very rich collection of competitive examination. Library should invites to guest lecturer for guiding to students for preparing the competitive exam.

#### **B. Technology-based Best/innovative Practices :**

The technology-based best/innovative practices that can be executed through a college library.

##### **1. Computerized Library with some software :**

Make your library a smart library with Library Administration Software which will turn your library in to a digital system where you can easily operate the automation process.

##### **2. Develop Library Portal :**

The Library Portal is a gateway to its resources and services. The purpose of this is to help users to find the location of qualitative and relevant web-based information with a click.

##### **3. Virtual Library Tour :**

Virtual Library Tour should be developed and linked to Library website. This tour will navigate you though:

- Accessing the Online Library
- What resources and services are available?
- Databases
- Database Username and Passwords
- Resource Discovery Tools
- Student Support
- The Enquiry Service

##### **4. Web OPAC :**

Provide facility of Web OPAC to identify the status of library collection with 24 x 7 access.

##### **5. Digital Reference Service :**

This is new form of traditional reference service. In this type service users may get the answers of their queries online. Users can submit their queries through online or may directly chat with concerned Library staff.

## **6. Develop Virtual presence :**

Librarian can use web applications like social media such as Blogs RSS, Wikis, Web forms etc.

**7. E-Alerting services :** With the help of E-mail or SMS.

## **8. Institutional Repository :**

Library should develop institutional repository of Question paper, Syllabus, Research papers, Notes, Thesis, Projects etc can be made available for students.

## **9. Din Darshika :**

Display information about great personalities on their birth anniversary through A/V aid throughout the day.

## **Strategy for Application of Best Practices :**

The successful execution of the best/innovative practices can be achieved by taking on the following five-stage:

1. Identification of best practices.
2. Implementation of best practices.
3. Institutionalization of best practices.
4. Internalization of best practices.
5. Dissemination of best practices.

To make better library resources facility best practices are a very effective medium. The execution of best practices in academic institutes plays the role of hurdle eliminator between library collection & user community for maximum utilization of the resources. Modern libraries have changed their appearance and adopted modern technology along with traditional facilities. The technology-based services play a crucial role in providing up-to-the-mark information to library users. The above best practices by every academic institution library creates its own image in the mind of students, faculty & society. The nature of the students to look library professional is a knowledge manager.

## **Conclusion :**

It concludes that best practices are a continuous process without interruption and should be intended to avoid inconvenience to the users. The need of the hour is for library and librarians to adopt the best practices in their role of adopting new changes and technologies and raising the standard of the library. Best practices of College library are very useful in providing support to students, staff and other external readers. In accordance with NAAC standards, libraries should establish, promote, maintain, and evaluate a range of quality services that support the colleges, mission and goals.

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