

BEST PRACTICES OF SDM IT LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

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ABSTRACT

The libraries are very important part in any academic institution. The library should always acts as a supplement to meet the vision and mission of the concerned institution. For a better and qualitative information service, the academic libraries need to play a significant role. The libraries should have to build the users' trust in the academic library services and to get them to use the services to capture information once, and then to share it across all relevant services to make information widely available, and to provide equal access to all. To attain this, library should inculcate some of the best practices to repetitive and maximum use of resources available in the library. In this paper, some of the best practices followed in SDMIT, Ujire are presented.

KEYWORDS: Best Practice, Book Exhibition, User Orientation, Best Library User & Worthy Answer Scripts

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INTRODUCTION

In modern days, by the effect of Information explosion and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), the functioning of academic libraries has changed a lot. The development or use of ICT has changed the expectation of the users of academic libraries in different ways. The way of information collection development, management, retrieval and services of library changed in recent days in a greater way from the traditional practices. To meet the end-users demands effectively and efficiently, the academic libraries need to identify and adopt good practices and benchmarks.

In any Higher Education institutions, Library and Information Services play a vital role in enhancing the quality of academic and research environment. It always acts as a supportive body for the academic growth of the concerned institution. Thus, the National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC) strive for quality and excellence in higher education and advocates for enhancing the role of Library and Information Services in improving academic environment. Though it is institutional accreditation that the NAAC does, the assessment of a library, a vital sub-unit is a key step that integrates itself with the overall evaluation.

Library is the fulcrum of support for the entire range of academic activities on an educational campus. In today's high-tech learning environment, the library as a learning resource is taking up increasingly more academic space and time in the life of a learner. Thus, this is the responsibility of every library to identify the set of best practices to promote the best services and to meet the needs of the end users.

BEST PRACTICES

Best practice, in simple term, is known as the practice which paves the way for enhancing the existing

function and help in effective implementation or use of the process. Best Practice may be innovative and be a philosophy, policy, strategy, program, process or practice that solves a problem or create new opportunities and positively impact on organizations. Institutional excellence is the aggregate of the best practices followed in different areas of institutional activities. In general, the use of modern technology and innovative ideas adopted by the LIS professionals lead to evolve best practices in library and information environment.

The Cascade of information sources and information explosion requires the libraries to play increasingly significant role in evaluating resources and educating the user. Satisfying with the existing services would not promote the standards and quality of information services. Hence, continuous user promotion and information literacy programs have to be launched with novel ideas to enhance the use of services. Some of the highlighted practices here are well accepted practices, experimented in different library environments in optimizing the use of library and information services.

The following practices are crucial in academic information services in enhancing the use. Listed below are few best practices that are followed in SDM Institute of Technology (SDMIT) library.

As the development of technology and information explosion, the demands of the users also vary. New skills and approaches are required for assessing the user's specific requirements. So, the professionals should think in the way how he/she can satisfy the users. This practice will lead to the exposure of vast collection of information sources.

Book Exhibition cum Sale by Publishers and Vendors

Table 1

<i>Goal of the Practice:</i>	The goal is to make awareness among the students and faculties on the latest books available in their subjects and to motivate the reading habit through purchase of books.
<i>The Process:</i>	A set of reputed book publishers and distributors are invited to display the recent books in the exhibition both general and subject. The library can suggest the publisher or vender the types of book needed to satisfy the users.
<i>Impact of the Practice:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book selection process is possible for the faculty members and the students for those who are interested to buy books to fulfill their information needs. - The user can suggest any book for the library. - Even the growth of the library collection can be possible. - Develop the selection and purchasing skill of the user.
<i>Resources required:</i>	Sufficient space needs to be provided to the booksellers to exhibit their collections and proper publicity among the users about the exhibition.
<i>Remarks, if any:</i>	It can be enlarged in future by inviting the database vendors to display digital resources.
<i>For further details/ contact person:</i>	The Principal / Librarian SDMIT, Ujire – 572 240 http://www.sdmit.in

This special practice helps the user to be aware of the whole / different varieties of collection of the library. The users can develop the reading of their interested area. Once the users are used to read different types of books, automatically they demand for more number of books of their interest. It will intern develop the collection of the library. It will lead to more number of users to the library and also best use of the resources available.

Library Book Exhibition in Different Occasion**Table 2**

Goal of the Practice:	The goal is to make awareness among the students on the books available within library and to develop the reading habit especially among the students.
The Process:	List of different occasions and a set of books on different categories are displayed on the separate table at the time of exhibition like engineer's day (books related to the engineering), world environmental day (books related to environment), world heart day, world health day etc. Some of the related articles published in newspaper and magazines are also exhibited.
Impact of the Practice:	Awareness about the collection of the library, develop the reading habit. Also users are curious about the special day on which the book is going to exhibit the special collection. It will help the readers in cultivate the reading habit in different fields than depending only upon their particular subject.
Resources required:	The library should have sufficient collection of books for the exhibition.
Remarks, if any:	It can be enlarged in future by sharing the resources available in neighboring institution or through reader's collection.
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The below practice helps the student category to develop the curiosity about who's internal answer script is going to display. This will give appreciation to the students, whose paper are displayed and also motivate other students in getting good scores in the test, so that, next time their paper can be displayed. Beside, the students will come to know how to write the answer to the particular question.

Display of Worthy Answer Scripts**Table 3**

Goal /Objective of the practice:	Motivate the students to show interest in Internal Assessment preparation and neat writing.
The process:	Regular display of worthy answer scripts from each subject after every internals.
Impact/outcome of the practice:	The students will go through the answer scripts displayed, it will motivate them to do good in coming internals. They wish and try to have their answer scripts to be displayed in future. Will also help them to identify their mistakes in answer or in way of answering and also neatness of the answer papers.
Resources Required :	Sending the circular to all the departments about selection of worthy answer scripts. Photocopying of the answer scripts received. Display of the answer scripts in the library on a separate table according to year and branch wise.
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The below practice is very basic one, to be followed by all the libraries. In any academic institution, the freshers basically hesitate to go around the library in search of information. And, it is also a troublesome process. It is a waste of time too. Many times, the resources needed are not accessible, because of unawareness. Thus, detailed orientation about the library in terms of types of collection, sections, arrangement, retrieval, resources available, services providing, procedures involved to access the sources and rules and regulations of the library should be explained properly to the better use and

easy way of handling the library.

Orientation to Fresher (Information Literacy Program)

Table 4

Goal of the practice:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To acquaint the new students in understanding the services that provides to them by library. - To enable the students to exploit the information resources available in the library to supplement their learning process to support class room teaching. - Creating awareness on library resources, facilities and services among new users and thus to ensure optimum use.
The Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Library has been conducting Orientation Program to the new students admitted every academic year. Library has drawn formal orientation classes in the library. Students attend the program according to the time-table drawn by the library. Within first days, after they are admitted to the courses, a time table is prepared by the library according to their free slot by consulting the Heads of Departments, to encourage the students to attend the orientation program as per schedule. Students are explained about the resources, different sections, facilities, services the library provides them. They are taken round the library apart from training them in searching the library database, e-journals, and Internet browsing etc. - This is orientation program to freshers, who have joined the college during the academic year. Instruction and presentation on use of catalogue and familiarization with organization of collection, type of resources available and range of services provided is highlighted. Information on rules and membership enrollment is provided. Students are taken on conducted library tours in groups to familiarize with various sections of the library.
Impact of the process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students find it useful to know about the resources available in their discipline. - They know specific locations of different types of materials and the privileges the library provides them. - The hands-on training in using the e-resources, OPAC etc is appreciated. - Encourage students to use the library by motivation. - Inculcate reading habits and self study among the student's particularly undergraduate students. - To build a good rapport between the users and library staff. - For the smooth functioning of the library.
Resources required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained library staff to handle classes. - Guides, brochures, rules and regulations of the library for distribution. - Preparation of presentations, lectures, manpower to do so and promotional materials is required
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In any academic institution, the student's tendency is that they have to impose the responsibilities, and it should be made it mandatory or they should be given some of the rewards. So, this practice is to attract the students community towards the library and make the best use of the resources available. In a long turn, it will be 'reading' that will become a habit of the students.

Best Library user Identification**Table 5**

Goal of the practice:	To attract more students to visit the library and optimum use of resources.
The Process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data is gathered through visitor attendance maintained in the library both students and faculties. - Usage data is compiled through total library usage in terms of hours and behavior at library. - Based on the above data and the observations of the librarian/library staff one best user award are given to the student who has made maximum use of the library and also from the staff. - A certificate as best library user of the month and a pen in the form of award is given to best user. - Every month report should take for the usage of the library. - Every month the list of top users of the month are displayed on the library notice board. - Preparation of the usage index branch wise and year wise in graphical figure, which is displayed on the notice board. - Take the print out of student and faculty best library user as 'congratulations for the best library user of the month' for display purpose.
Impact of the process:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in frequency of visits to the library. - Increase in the use of library reference materials. - Healthy competition among students to get the reward
Resources required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance for instituting awards. - Maintenance/Monitoring of user statistics. - Commitment from librarian and support of management is also required.
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CONCLUSIONS

A good library is not the one, which has good collection or good infrastructure, but mainly depends on the basis of the usage of the users. Thus, this paper tries to make the information centers to maximum utilization of the existing resources and the development of the resources. The practices mentioned in this document such as user orientation, display of worthy answer scripts, book exhibition are feasible for many libraries to adopt in enhancing the quality of the services.

The documentation followed in the selected libraries as the best practice, will initiate other libraries to opt for this ideal way of managing the libraries and services of academic institutions. Each library, which is following the best practices, should have the responsibility of periodical reviews and the update, as and when required.

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