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BEST PRACTICES IN COLLEGE LIBRARIES: A CASE STUDY AT JSS COLLEGE LIBRARY, DHARWAD



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ABSTRACT:

The Library is the life blood of college education. The vision and mission of the college are invariably the vision and mission of the Library. To improve the quality of education and in order to meet the challenges posed by Globalization, Privatization, Liberalization and ICT's etc, the college libraries have a great role to play in under taking best practices. In this paper an attempt has been made to describe in brief the profile, collection development, special services offered and the introduction of best practices like, Gold Card, Silver Card award etc, to motivate their interest in reading which intern inspires the budding Library professionals in designing their own outreach activities.

KEYWORDS : Best practices, databases, orientation, inter library loan.

1. INTRODUCTION:

“Change is life, monotony is death” goes the age old saying. Change for survival” is the inner belief among today’s Library professionals. ‘Library is a growing organism’ stated S.R.Ranganathan more than six decades ago which has stood the test of time even today and continues to be in future for ever. To cope up with the growth and the changes in the organization / library, Librarians or information professionals have always adopted to the latest technological innovations, gadgets, to collect, organize and disseminate information at much faster phase, particularly in the past 2-3 decades.

Online media and its increasing usage rate have changed the mind set of the new generation of users, which in turn affected significantly library profession & practitioners. Internet has created wide variety of information gathering vis-à-vis generates information needs hence online tools become important and effective components of the modern library services. Since most of us are academicians it is the time to think on these lines. Apart from promoting traditional books circulation by way of introducing Gold Card, Silver Card and Best user Awards in JSS College Library as a novel method of best practice in libraries, more emphasis is also being given on ICT application, Online databases, free accessible E-books, E- Journals, General E-books and some useful academic websites to the students, faculty and researchers at its behest to suite their requirements accordingly.

2. OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of these best practices is to establish and concretize the contact between librarian and the reader. This activity implies putting the library into most cordial and understanding relationship with all the user community and is an attempt to convert the library into a interaction center for intellectual activities. The main objectives of this programme are:

- a. To create library awareness among the user community i.e. students/ faculty/ staff and administration staff
- b. To highlight the existence of the library, collection, services for their study and research.
- c. To reach the information to the unreached at the right time.
- d. To make the user to utilize the resources, facilities at its best.

Traditionally, academic library outreach has meant reaching out to the campus community, providing services to faculty and students. Many universities and colleges however, have a new emphasis on out reach beyond the campus, seeking to ensure their institutions’ relevance to the community at large.

The goal of this best practice / extension activity is to see that the programmes to be reached for non user, the under served and the people with special need within the campus. To meet the diverse needs of user community, libraries must keep in touch with these activities and provide tailored made services to meet ever changing needs. In addition to providing needed services to the members, these outreach programmes within the library provide a unique opportunity to improve public image within the service community.

3. BEST PRACTICES AT JSS COLLEGE LIBRARY DHARWAD:

3.1 Orientation:

Orientation programme is the traditional and most commonly service provided by any Library. However, at JSS College Library, the service is the ‘service with a difference’. That is, JSS College Library has the tradition of organizing “Library Orientation” in the beginning of the every academic year. It

consists of a detailed lecture with power point presentation followed by library tour. Once the admission formalities completed, preparatory lecture session on library (along with the core subjects) will be conducted for students, one hour for each class per section. During this period brief information on the Library collection, Organizational structure, Facilities, Services offered by the Library will be made known to each candidates. The importances of the library in academic activities, rules, procedures, do's and don'ts will be explained briefly. The fresher's are given practical training for more than 3-5 hours on information search and retrieval, besides training them in finding out the library holdings of their needs and requirements. This helps the students in getting acquainted themselves with the library resources & services on computers and saves the time of reader as well as staff of the library indirectly by reducing the user queries.

3.2 Gold Card Facility:

Those students who have scored more than 75% in their previous exam or 8.5 CGPA in their present course / semester exams are eligible to borrow one more additional book along with their regular borrowings. The validity of this facility will be for the current one semester only. This encourages the users to do better and excel in their academic pursuit.

3.3 Silver Card :

Top ten users will be selected for this category on the basis of their visits to the library, number of books borrowed during the period of one month or total transactions made during that period will be considered. Those who come under this selection are eligible to borrow one more additional book along with their regular borrowings till the completion of their semester which motivates users to use library resources and services extensively.

3.4 Training programme on use of E-Resources:

In the light of the widespread use of the internet, students are aware of the help that Internet can provide in building up their carriers. By and large they use the Internet on their own. Large number of students uses the internet for E-mail. UG and PG students may be using Internet resources for working on academic assignments as well as preparation of notes for competitive examinations. In case of research scholars, it is obvious that WWW resources are very helpful for research purpose. Apart from E-mail and retrieval of WWW resources, chat is also popular as a substantial number of students chatting while they are availing the online facility. The volume of downloading the information and the number of people downloading has consistently been on the rise and commensurate with the level of their educational needs. Based on this background, JSS College Library at Dharwad made an attempt to grab the attention of the students, faculty and researchers at its behest and tried to maximize the utilization of its resources to suite their requirements by making use of IT in its Library and information center.

The Library organizes demonstrations, trainings on online data bases from time to time to create awareness among the library members. Some of the important and useful online database is INFLIB NET- N List, and Academic websites being served at JSS College Library.

3.5 Online Free Journals and their Links:

Online Free Journals and their Links are being served to the Faculty, Students and Researchers at JSS College Library for optimum utilization of the available resources and to establish cordial relationship among them and also on a best practice not commonly find in similar other libraries.

3.6 Useful websites for Educationists and Researchers:

Further, the library provides services purely for serious readers like, the researchers and faculties. Here a few useful websites, Name of the Organization and their Address Links are provided for reference.

- a. Healthy Lifestyle - <http://www.healthy-india.org/>
- b. Sakshat - An online Education Portal of MHRD - www.cbse.nic.in/prosak1.doc
- c. National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) - <http://www.ncert.nic.in/>
- d. Think.Com - <http://www.think.com/>
- e. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) - <http://www.cbse.nic.in/>
- f. Think Quest - <http://www.thinkquest.org/>
- g. Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) - <http://www.navodaya.nic.in/>
- h. Oracle Academy - <http://www.academy.oracle.com/>
- i. Central Tibetan Schools Administration (CSTA) - <http://www.ctsa.nic.in/>
- j. Edusat - <http://www.edusatindia.org/>
- k. National Institute of Open Schooling - <http://www.nos.org/>
- l. Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education - <http://www.hbcse.tifr.res.in/>
- m. Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur - <http://www.iitk.ac.in/>
- n. Indian Institute of Technology Delhi - <http://www.iitd.ac.in/>
- o. Indian Institute of Technology Bombay - <http://www.iitb.ac.in/>
- p. Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur - <http://www.iitkgp.ernet.in/>
- q. Indian Institute of Technology Madras - <http://www.iitm.ac.in/>
- r. Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee - <http://www.iitr.ac.in/>
- s. Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati - <http://www.iitg.ac.in/>
- t. Biology in Motion - <http://www.biologyinmotion.com/>
- u. Physics.org - <http://www.physics.org/>
- v. Science Museum - <http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/>
- w. UNESCO - <http://www.unesco.org/>
- x. How Stuff Works - <http://www.howstuffworks.com/>

Besides the above, there are other services / practices followed at JSS library are:

Inter Library Loan: While catering to the multi dimensional information needs of its users, the main aim of the JSS Library Dharwad is to provide required information by obtaining from other libraries if it is not available in its collection.

Web OPAC: This digital era made a revolutionary impact on the libraries. Now a day, by extending the horizons of their services beyond four walls, traditional libraries become virtual libraries. JSS library has also made use of the technology in creating the database of its holdings and provided the Web OPAC facility. This has helped the users to check and track the availability of the required documents in the JSS Library.

Newspapers: Library receives 14 Newspapers covering English, Kannada and Hindi language are made available to users in the Newspaper section. The back issues will be provided to users on request. Articles are being archived under different domains.

Micro documents and other Resources: The Library holds non-book materials, which are meant only for reference. Institute Publications, Seminar Papers, Reports and Question papers which prove to be

very useful to the students.

Renewal / Reservations can be done online / over phone: Students and faculty can keep claims for books which have been issued out by filling up a Reservation form available on the Academic website or on the Library portal. They will be informed on the expected date of its return and as soon as on the day of book received in the library. So that they can come and collect it. If it is not collected within 24 hours, the book will be issued to the next user in the queue.

4. CONCLUSION

Traditionally libraries have believed that, their products and services had intrinsic merit and that customers would automatically be attracted to the library. This type of thinking does not help libraries to meet the challenges of today which include securing sufficient funding, increasing client usage and developing and reinforcing the concept that the library is an essential service. Libraries need to focus on designing and delivering products and services to meet the identified needs of their community. Although disseminating information originating in the developed world, is certainly a useful activity, a more effective strategy for sustained long term human development is to disseminate the capability of creating information collections rather than the collections themselves. No doubt that the college libraries play a vital role for achieving goals and objectives of its parent institution. It is the responsibility of the academic libraries to follow the best practices in order to improve the quality of its services and sustenance which are being followed and practiced to a great extent at JSS College Library Dharwad.

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