

Best Practices in Academic Library



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Introduction

A recent time has been a drastic change in the conduction of education. The area that has been vast important is the library services as the user demands diverse and comprehensive fulfillment of his needs. So the major question is what are those changes which cater to the needs of a customer? What are the practices newly introduced in academic libraries? Which are the best practices that fulfill the purpose of institution as well as need of customer? In light of the above questions, the researchers have surveyed the academic library of different colleges of Mehsana city. Here is a look at what is meant by best practice in education field and in particular, with context to academic library.

Best Practices

Best Practice is a concept that migrated from the business community to the academic world as part of knowledge management. A practice qualifies to best practices status if it results in a high value impact on any aspect of the educational activity of an institution. Academic organizations gather information about the practices of other academic units of comparable size and scope. They compare the outside organizations with each other and with themselves to identify the best practices in their areas of interest.

Best practices in library

In the library context, the 'best practice' may be viewed as one that enhances user satisfaction contributing to full realization of one's academic potential.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the practices of academic library. 2. To analyze the best practice in terms of its goal, context, process, evidence of success, advantages, disadvantages, problems encountered and resolved, & resources required.

Methodology

The methodology of the study comprises of sample, tools, sources and research method. Here is a look at the details of each.

Method:

The survey method of descriptive research has

been employed for the study of practices of academic libraries. On basis of identification of the best practice in academic libraries, case study method has been employed for the in depth study of best practices.

Tools:

For the present study, self made questionnaire has been used for the survey of academic libraries. The questionnaire comprises of fourteen questions. The purpose of questionnaire is identifying the various practices of academic libraries. Face validity has been determined with the help of experts of education. The librarians are main sources of information. For the in depth study of best practice, interview schedule was prepared for librarian, faculties and students.

Population and sample:

The academic libraries of various colleges of Mehsana city are the population of present study. The colleges affiliated with Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University, Patan or Gujarat technical university, Gandhinagar are included in the present study. Primary teachers' training colleges are not included in the present study. The sample comprises of 14 Academic colleges. Among them 3 B.Ed. colleges, 2 M.Ed. Colleges, 5 under and post graduate Arts, commerce and science colleges, one homeopathic college, one B.C.A. college, one law college and one pharmacy college.

Analysis

The questionnaire has two types of questions. Closed form questions and open form questions. The analysis of closed form questions are carried out using frequency and percentage and the analysis of open form questions are carried out using content analysis techniques. The researcher's attempts to gather information of all major practices of Mehsana city libraries through survey. After analyzing all these practices, researcher has decided to study most student benefits activity i.e. Arrangement of seminar. The details of arrangement of seminar are as follows. This activity belongs to teacher training college at secondary level.

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The analysis of questions

Q. No.	Descriptions	Results
1	Computerization	80% libraries are computerized. SOUL softer is used in all these libraries.
2	Publishing prospectus	80% colleges have prospectus with detail information of libraries. There was no single library with its own separate prospectus.
3	Customer Visit Record	All libraries maintain customer visit record using register only. No library used computer for maintaining the customer visit record.
4	Exhibition of news clipping	All libraries exhibit news paper clipping. Among them 60% libraries exhibit education, current problems and general knowledge related information. Whereas 40% libraries exhibit all type of information i.e. educational, occupational, social, current problems, sports and general knowledge information.
5	Career corner	80% libraries have career corner.
6	Internet facility	Only 10% libraries have internet facility.
7	Suggestion box	Only 30% libraries have suggestion box. Majority suggestion are regarding library management (70%), for purchasing books (30%) and regarding cleanliness (10%).
8	Book exhibition	All libraries arrange books exhibition.
9	Reading camp	50% libraries arrange reading camp.
10	Arrangement for new arrivals	50% libraries have section for new arrivals.
11	Arrangement of competition and events	60% libraries do not arrange any type of competition and events. 40% libraries arrange elocution competition, quiz, and Antakshary.
12	Customer survey	80% libraries do customer survey. The findings of this survey are used for purchasing new books.
13	Prize for best customer/ reader	30% libraries give prize to best customer/reader
14	Celebration of Library Day	20% libraries celebrate Library Day.
15	Extras special activity	30% libraries arrange seminar, 30% libraries arrange Gandhi exhibition and book exhibition during off campus.
16	Differently arranged activity	Collection of articles, photos. Communication with media. Display photos on notice board. Arranging seminar.

Arrangement of Seminar by Library

The context: `

The remarkable shift in pedagogy has brought pressure and responsibility to take right steps for the training college. It is well understood that skills should be part of any training college. Presently, training colleges are passing through the transition period. In this present situation, future teachers lack in some essential skills. These are presentation skills and some soft skills. Even the new era will be not asking only degrees and percentage but also effective skills for teaching the students.

Goal:

The goal of the programme is: 1. To increase reading habits among students. 2. Students acquire knowledge regarding some current events and also their subject area. To make the students acquainted with latest journals, books and internet search for details of various topics related to seminar. 3. To train students in communication skills, presentation skills. 4. Helping student to sharpen their Skills.

The practice: First step: identifying relevant topic for seminar The most important step to conduct semi-

nar is identifying the relevant topic for the seminar. So the librarian of the college takes responsibility. He makes a list of latest relevant topic after searching websites, journal and other available resources. He invites suggestions from the faculties regarding seminar subject. After the discussion with the principal, librarian identifies the relevant topic and displays the seminar topic on notice board.

Second step: volunteer participation of student in seminar The second and most important step is student participation in seminar. Student participation is volunteer decision. If there are more volunteer student to participate in seminar, student selection is made on basis of student's aptitude.

Third step: student preparation for seminar In this step, students acquaint with seminar topic. The main topic is divided among four students. After that, they collect the information regarding particular topic with the help of librarian. They also consult the expert of that particular topic and get the suggestion. According that, they prepare notes and presentation.

Fourth step: to conduct seminar For Seminar, librarian collects all resources & arrange presentation

hall with latest equipments. One of faculty is chair person on that particular day. Seminar participants present their topic. After presentation, student can raise the questions and they get clarification of their doubts.

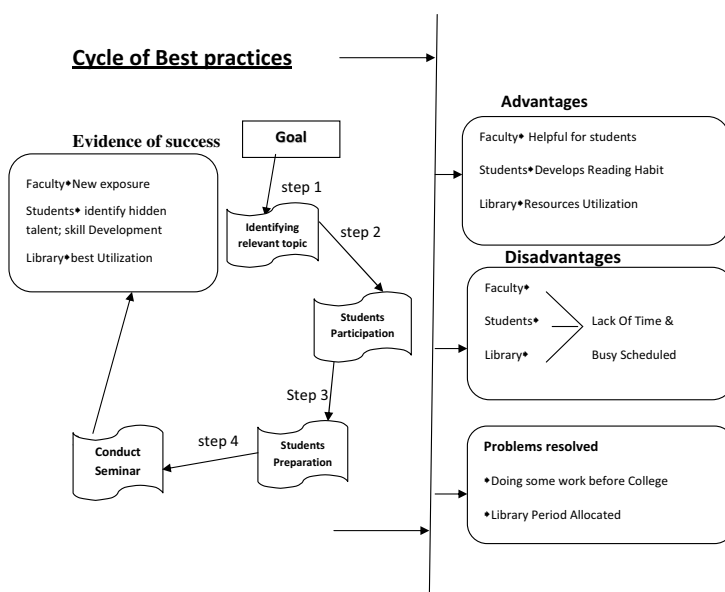
Problems encountered and resolved: The training colleges always have busy schedule. So it is difficult to spare time in routine work. Even students are busy with their lesson planning, co curricular activity and their regular educational & research activity. These all problems are addressed with doing some work before college hour. Library period allocated twice in a week & Students voluntarily spent extra time in library.

Evidence of success: The impact of the programme is immense.

The faculties confess that such programme is helpful to students. They develop critical thinking and they encourage students to improve their skills. Students identify their hidden talents, Develops reading habits & become aware of Library resources. Increase utilization of Library Resources (Print & Non - Print). Internet & ILL Service also improve their quality.

Advantages & Disadvantages: Faculty felt that Seminar activity helps student to improve their reading habits. Student realizes that their reading habit increase in various topics related their educational purpose. Due to this activity usage of library also increases. But at the same time, this activity makes faculties; librarian and students schedule get busy they didn't find spare time for them.

Resource required: Resources required means man, machine and materials. The most basic resources needed is dedicated Human Resources. Team work is essential among faculties, librarian as well as students.



OHP, Multimedia & well equipped computer system with LCD also require for conducting seminar forum.

Conclusion: Library is the temple of wisdom; it is from here that one can get innovative thoughts as well as knowledge regarding his area of interest. If the library works with its full potential, then it can help students, faculties, and at large society too. So it is necessary to analyze the practices of library. In this attempt researcher has identified the best practice among all the practices of academic libraries of Mehsana city. It is found that arrangement of seminar by library is the best practice of academic library. Encouraging students to participate in seminar, it is possible to attempt it maximize utilization of the library resources. The librarian himself improves his efficiency and faculties also get good academic exposure through efforts made by library. In this way institution can grow and as a result, the society delights.

REFERENCE

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