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LIBRARIES BEYOND BORDERS:
INNOVATIVE TRENDS, ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

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BEST PRACTICES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (AUTONOMOUS), PALAYAMKOTTAI – A STUDY

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Introduction

According to Professor S. Gupta, "The quality of the academic library, that is, the school library, the college library and the university library is conditioned not wholly, but largely, by the quality of education the academic institution imparts, which in turn depends directly on the quality of its teacher, their teaching methods, the policy of educational administration, and indirectly, on the government which has to find money for the general improvement of such academic institutions." The academic libraries include: 1) School Libraries, 2) College Libraries, 3) University Libraries. Lyle distinguishes three levels of college use. All the three are related to (i) The type of curriculum programme, (ii) The method of teaching, and (iii) The attitude towards the use of library in teaching. The first one is called as textbook level, the second, the reserve book level; and the third one is independent study level. The librarian has to play an important role to promote the independent study by the student. The librarians have to implement the best practices in the libraries.

NAAC Best Practices for Universities and Autonomous Colleges

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council have set up standards for the smooth running of Colleges, Universities and Libraries. In the library context, 'the best practice' may be viewed as one that enhances the user satisfaction contributing to full realization of one's academic potential. Listed below are some of the best practices.

1. Library brochure / Diaries / Information Packs.

2. Central Reference Library for the use of constituent and affiliated colleges.

3. A feedback from stakeholders through scientifically designed and analyzed questionnaire, at least twice a year.

4. Compiling and displaying of student / teacher usage of statistics in the library or department notice boards.

5. Communicating of current awareness to different user groups.

6. Information about literacy programmes.

7. To begin the year with a general presentation.

b. Periodically need-based groups.

c. Teaching library programmes

7. Creation of digital repositories

- Article repositories

- Publication repositories

- Questionnaire

- Course wise repositories

8. Display of the new arrivals / journals and circulating a list to different departments.

9. Suggestion box and timely response.

10. Development of website / web page for the library incorporating all the services and necessary information.

11. Establishing linkage with other libraries and providing free and nominal fee services.

12. Initiative to research projects / turn-key projects from the library.

13. Development of electronic environment on the campus and encouragement of e-deliveries.

14. Developing linkage with the functional units of the universities.

➤ Information Centre

➤ Computer Centre

➤ Department of Computer Science

➤ Student Welfare Cell / Training & Placement Cell

15. Conducting exhibitions / demonstrations / lectures on current affairs.

16. Building a network of college libraries under the aegis of the university.

St. Xavier's college of Education (SXCE)

St. Xavier's College of Education is one of the three educational Institutions owned by the Society of St. Francis Xavier, a body registered under the Societies Registration Act (S.No.3 of 1920-21), having its office at Palayamkottai. The College was started in the year 1950 as St. Xavier's Teachers' Training College at St. Xavier's College Campus by Rev. Fr. Bonhoure S.J. its first Principal. The college has been able to establish its' mark of excellence in the educational map of India by hard and strenuous efforts of Rev. Fathers, Rev. Brothers and lay collaborators. The NAAC peer team, headed by Prof. Dr. P. Ramaiah, Emeritus Professor of UGC, visited the college on 28 and 29th December 2012 to make an assessment of the college as part of the re-accreditation process. Based on the report and recommendations presented by the peer team, NAAC re-accredited (3rd Cycle) the college with 'A' grade with CGPA of 3.67 for a period of five years from 2012-2013. The UGC Expert Committee comprising of Shri. A.K. Dogra, Prof. P. Thirumoorthy, N.D. Veronica and Prof. P. Ramaiah visited the College on 27th April 2006 to grant Autonomous status to the college. Based on their recommendations, the UGC conferred the status of Autonomy. It was formally inaugurated on 28th August 2006.

Fr. Utarid Library of St. Xavier's college of Education

The library is the heart of an institution and very helpful to the students, teachers and researchers. Our new library has two floored building with 150 seating capacity. Now library has 21586 books, 1314 book bank books, 871 dissertations, 53 dissertation abstracts international, 735 back volumes of journals, 245 CD's and 10 years question bank. The library subscribes 4 International and 39 national journals from reputed institutions. The library is also subscribes to 27 magazines and 2 daily news papers. The Library is fully computerized through Rovan Technologies library management system and students are searching the resources through computer-based catalogue (Online Public Access Catalogue /OPAC).There is a separate digital library section. Digital library has 96000 e-books, more than 2000 online journals subscribes through UGC N-List consortium. For resources explorations nearby 75 students use the library every day. Every year M.Ed students from 20 colleges utilize the library resources for their dissertation work. Around 60 Ph.D scholars from various universities and colleges from Tamil Nadu and Kerala have visited our library for their thesis work.

Best Practices in Our College Library

Our college library has conducted a lot of programmes in every academic year to serve the needs of the users like students and staff members of the college. The following are list of the best practices in our library.

➤ The library has a very large information board. It includes all the updated information like resources and services available in the library.

➤ The library is fully computerized by Rovan LMS software and has two systems for accessing the online public access catalogue (OPAC) for students.

➤ Every month the librarian displays the library usage statistics on the library notice board. The statistics includes number of students visited, number of staff members visited, number of new books and periodicals added, number of reference books, dissertations, back volumes of journals referred, number of students using the digital library, number of outside scholars visited, number of Xerox copies and printouts taken, etc.

➤ Organized library orientation programme for the fresher's on starting of the every academic year. The programme focussing the reading habits of students and explain the resources available, services available and how to make use of the library.

➤ Organized book exhibition both to the staff and students of the college for promoting the reading habits. The staff members also recommend the books to the library through this exhibition.

➤ Every year, after the accessing and technical processing of the books, the new arrivals displayed on the library table for students and staff members.

➤ The Principal, Library Director and the librarian select the best library users in the academic year and honour them. Four prizes are awarded one for a B.Ed First Year student, B.Ed 2nd Year student, PG Student and staff member from the college.

➤ Every year, our library organizes the World Books Day on April 23rd we conduct the essay competitions and prizes are distributed on the celebration of World Books Day.

➤ The library has a separate e-Resources section. It has seven computers and two kindle e-Readers for reading the e-books in the library. The e-Readers have TET examination materials and English Grammar, Vocabulary and proverbs.

➢ Suggestion box is also available in the library.

➢ Separate Wi-Fi connection in the library for accessing and downloading the electronic resources regularly.

➢ Separate student's service centre including reprography (Xerox) and print- out facility to cater the needs of students, scholars and staff members is also available.

Organized Programmes in Fr. Utarid Library

1. Two Days "UGC-NET Preparatory Programme for LIS Professionals" took place on November 15th and 16th 2013, and jointly organized with SALIS, Tirunelveli Chapter.

2. Extension Lecture on "Role of Library: A Tool for Effective Teaching Learning Process" , Lecture by Dr.C.Martin Arockiasamy, Librarian, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) on 27/04/2013

3. Three days Library Week Celebrations was celebrated. Two guest talks (Mr. K. Ramasamy, Librarian, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Madurai and Dr. S. Suriyanarayanan, Librarian (S.G), SPKC, Alwarkurichi) & one essay competition (Topic : The Impact of ICT on Reading Habits) conducted on March 5th to 7th 2014.

4. World Book Day Celebrations were held on 28th April 2014. A Special lecture on **"Puthakangalai Purattungal"** delivered by Dr. **S. Ally Sornam** , Dean (Research and Development), Associate Professor & Head, PG & Research Department of Library and Information Sciences, Bishop Heber College (Autonomous),Trichirapalli.

5. Three days Library Week Celebrations including two guest talk (Mr. J. Arumugam, Information Officer, TCS, Chennai and Dr. A. Manoharan, Associate Professor (Retd) , Bishop Heber College, Tiruchi & one essay competition (Topic : The Impact of ICT on Reading Habits) on 15th to 17th September 2014.

6. Two Days "UGC-NET Preparatory Programme for LIS Professionals" held on November 21st and 22nd 2014, and jointly with SALIS, Tirunelveli Chapter

7. World Book Day Celebrations were on 23rd April 2015. Guest Lectured by Prof. M. Muniyasamy, Chief Librarian, Pandian Saraswathy Yadav College of Engineering, Sivaganga.

8. Two Days "UGC-NET Preparatory Programme for LIS Professionals" hosted on November 27th and 28th 2015, and jointly organized with SALIS, Tirunelveli Chapter.

9. World Book Day Celebrations on 22nd April 2016 at St. Xavier's College of Education, Palayamkottai Lecture on "Reading Books: Axis of Today's Livings" Lectured by Dr. A. Muthukrishnan , Librarian (Grade I) , District Central Library, Tirunelveli.

10. Library orientation programme to the fresher's (2016-2018 batch students) was held on 23.09.2016 Dr. N. Selvaganapathy, Librarian, Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil and Joint Secretary SALIS Tirunelveli Chapter, resource person of the programme.

11. National Conference on "Electronic Resources and Academic Libraries: Exploring Trends Technologies, Practices, Services and Management (NCERAAL 2016)" on 21st and 22nd October 2016, and jointly with Society for Advancement in Library and Information Science (SALIS) Tirunelveli Chapter.

12. Book exhibition to both staff and students of the college was held on 21st and 22nd November 2016. Higginbotham's Private Limited, SAI Book Gallery and Tamil Nadu Book House, Tirunelveli participated in the exhibition and exhibited more than 3000 books on various titles including Education, Psychology, Technology, English, Tamil and General books.

13. Three Days "UGC-NET Preparatory Programme for LIS Professionals" was conducted on December 16th to 18th 2016, and jointly organized with SALIS, Tirunelveli Chapter.

Professional Development

➤ Our college library caters the needs of library professionals in the country. In this context, last four years it conducted the UGC-NET preparatory programme for the library professionals. 91 LIS professionals were benefited through this programme and 3 of them get through the NET examination.

➤ Our library organized the National Conference on "**Electronic Resources and Academic Libraries: Exploring Trends, Technologies, Practices, Services and Management (NCERAAL 2016)**" jointly with the Society for Advancement in Library and Information Science (SALIS), Tirunelveli Chapter on 21st and 22nd October 2016. 160 LIS professionals from all over the country were participated and 128 papers presented.

Conclusion

The Library of St. Xavier's College of Education, Palayamkottai is implementing all standard rules and regulations and best practices for libraries framed by the authorities like UGC, NCTE, NAAC and Affiliated University. As a result, it is emerging as a model academic library.

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