LAW COLLEGE LIBRARIES' BEST PRACTICES TO ENCOURAGE USAGE OF LIBRARY: OFFLINE & ONLINE SERVICES
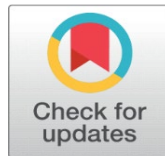
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ABSTRACT

Purpose
Best practices help to improve the quality of library services. Librarians can actively engage in these best practices, connect with their groups, attract more library readers/ visitors, and fruitfully recommend their resources and services. These library services and innovative practices can help to get a good score in the NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council). The significance of library best practices is to boost readers' research needs. It can help the librarian understand how to develop library services to encourage library book reading.

Design/methodology/approach
The research adopts an empirical study. This research investigates the best practices functional in academic law libraries. Such practices for physical and online library services encourage users to explore the library. Implementation of these strategies assists librarians in achieving favourable outcomes in NAAC accreditation.

Findings
The study will examine how libraries' innovative practices enhance accreditation standards and identify areas where improvements are needed. Best practices reduce the gap between readers and the library's collection and create awareness about available resources, including e-resources. This study contributes to raising awareness among library administrators and staff about various library services to enhance online and offline library usage. Best practices also help to improve the skills of library staff. As per the findings, the librarian has to promote library services.

Research limitations
The limitation of this study is that it is for law colleges affiliated with the University of Mumbai. The population of this study covers all law college librarians and library staff affiliated with the University of Mumbai. Though the total number of law colleges is 84, only 61 staff members responded to the questionnaire used for the empirical study.

Practical implications
The findings of the study contribute to enhancing the NAAC score. With the help of this study, library staff and those in charge of the library can show their capabilities in implementing innovative best practices in the library.
This study helps to
1) Start various innovative library services to enhance library usage.
2) To create awareness among law colleges about the library's best practices for the NAAC grading.

Originality/value
This study is among the few papers in the library science literature on best practices applied in law college libraries. It increases our understanding of best practices in libraries.

Keywords: Best Practices, Library Best Practices, Library Visit, Library Usage, Marketing of Library, Offline and Online Library Services, Law Library, NAAC, Legal Institution

1. INTRODUCTION

Wakimoto (2016) explores various best practices and approved library processes. Ranganathan et al. (2022) state that in the 21st century, librarians are dynamically playing a role in the NAAC process as leaders of IQAC or NAAC Coordinators and promoting best practices to enhance institutional quality. Thakuria et al. (2021) study was based on the Karimganj District, Assam, and the NAAC guideline. Researchers found insufficient funding and a lack of trained staff for automation and administration. Wadnerkar study shows the importance of best practices for library staff and librarian to enhance their skills in the digital age. Bhedekar (2015) study shows the impact of NAAC on best practices in college libraries of Beed district(Maharashtra). Ghavidel (2011), A case study of public libraries in Tehran (Iran) for the TQM Model in Public Libraries affiliated to the institution. The total population for this study is 72 staff members. The study shows library management's strengths and weaknesses and helps improve service quality. Rathna and Divyananda's (2018) study helps to understand technology-based services in engineering libraries, mainly focused on autonomous colleges of Karnataka. A study shows that innovative services, continuous technological updates, and integration enhance library success.

Legal education institutions develop legal and ethical values that help give justice to all people. The institute develops students' careers in advocacy, the legal profession, the Judiciary, legal research, mooting, etc. The Bar Council of India (BCI) makes it compulsory for all legal educational institutions to certify the NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) grading. The legal manual was introduced in November 2021 on the NAAC portal. Legal manuals were introduced for law schools/universities affiliated with UG & PG (undergraduate and postgraduate) institutions, which helps HEIs provide a quality learning system. Legal manuals and SOPs (standard operating procedures) help fill out the SSR (self-study report). With the help of that SSR, all Higher Education Institutions(HEI) are graded. NAAC has provided valuable guidelines to improve the overall quality of the Library & Information Centre and the services offered by these centres.

Librarians can increase library usage by adhering to Ragananathan's five laws. Library and information science need to follow five laws.

As per Ranganathan's five laws

1) Books are for use
2) Every reader has their book
3) Every book has its reader
4) Save the time of the reader
5) The library is a growing organism

Librarians play crucial roles in the library and must follow these five laws. Librarians must be active, efficient, and excellent in library services to understand the needs of library users. Higher education institutions have to follow various activities and extension services to enhance the quality of learning. Librarians need to execute multiple best practices to improve the quality of library services.

1.1. DEFINITION OF BEST PRACTICES

Merriam-Webster defines best practices as "a procedure shown by research and experience to produce optimal results, and that is established or proposed as a standard suitable for widespread adoption".

Oxford Advanced Learner defines "a way of doing something that is seen as an excellent example of how it should be done and can be copied by other companies or organisations".

NAAC has developed a set of forty-eight best practices for the library and information centres. The data on best practices have been collected from libraries nationwide in a specific format developed by NAAC. The best practices are divided into four categories:

1) Management and Administration of the Library.

2) Collection and Services.
3) Extent of User Services.
4) Use of Technology.

Law college librarians must develop library services based on new technology and the new generation. With the help of this law, libraries can implement a 21st-century best practice in college libraries.

2. OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH PAPER

1) The paper aims to augment awareness about the best practices that will help strengthen the NAAC accreditation grade.
2) This research helps to boost library services to cope with today's users' needs.
3) Suggest how to develop library services to increase library usage.
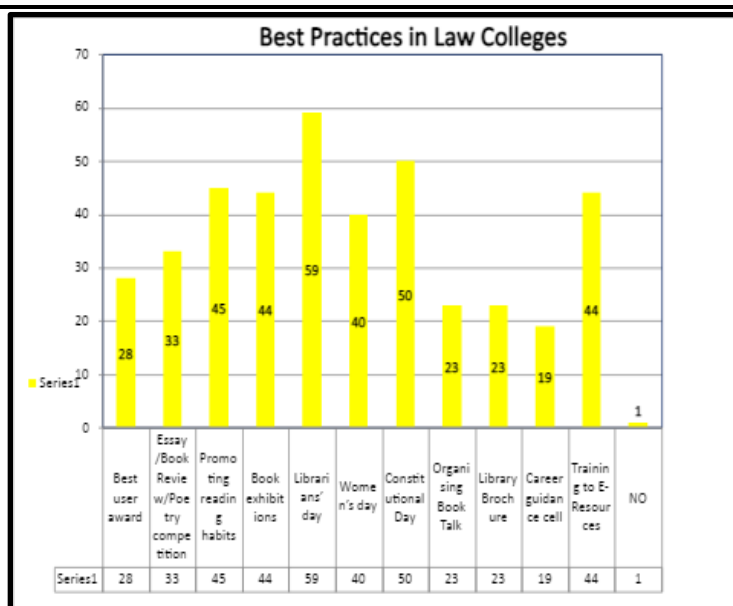
3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Borade, Nirmala & Golwal, Madansing D. (2023). This paper helps understand academic libraries' various best practices, such as extension, online, and effective library management services. It helps understand multiple best practices, such as IT-based and traditional-based and encourages librarians and library staff to improve library service quality. Chandrappa, Narayanaswamy Vasantha Raju, and N. S. Harinarayana(July 2023), research on Indian Maritime University Libraries in India shows that libraries and librarians are knowledge providers, and they help researchers increase their research with various research tools like Research Gate, Web of Science, Shodh-Chakra, etc. Barge, Anuradha Dattatrya's (October 2022) study on " NAAC-Recognised Best Practices in academic libraries" This paper helps to understand Library best practices for improvement in NAAC grades. Dr. Anita Chandwani (2022) pointed out that we must adopt the NAAC policy for the best methodology for developing a library for NAAC preparation, which will help improve library infrastructure and service performance.Ambika C A., Ganesan, P. (2020). This study is based on the content analysis of the Accredited Engineering College Library website of Bengaluru (Bangalore). The researcher analysed 26 engineering college library websites affiliated with VTU, and the findings of this study revealed that the library website is a tool that helps in the NAAC process.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was adopted to collect the quantitative data. Questionnaires were distributed among the law librarians. 85 law college librarian questionnaires (Google Form Link) were sent on WhatsApp, and 61 respondents' responses were received. With the help of a Google Form link, an auto-generated Excel sheet is ready for data analysis. With the help of the data uploaded to SPSS, I created a chart and did a T-test and an ANOVA Table.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data shows that out of 61 respondents, 21(20%) are male and 40 (60%)are female. It shows that more female library staff are recruited in Law colleges than male candidates.

Best Practices available in law libraries

Best user award

Based on the data presented in the table, the contribution and awareness of librarians and library staff regarding best practices in the library have been analysed. The findings indicate that awareness of the Best User Award, the data reveals that out of 61 staff members, 28 (45.90%) have organised essay competitions as part of best practices.

Literary Competitions: Essay, Book Review, and Poetry

This initiative encourages active participation in literary activities by organising competitions in essay writing, book reviews, and poetry. The primary objective of this initiative is to motivate participants, promote active library usage, and contribute to institutional excellence in NAAC accreditation. According to the data, 33 staff members (54.09%) have taken the initiative to implement this practice.

Promoting Reading Habits

This initiative enables libraries to strengthen the bond between users and the library collection, fostering academic growth. Librarians can encourage reading habits by organising book clubs, author interactions, and group discussions on contemporary topics and issues. These efforts cultivate a dynamic reading culture and contribute to academic excellence.The table indicates that 45 staff members (73.77%) actively organise reading habit initiatives in their colleges.

Book Exhibition

The library's book exhibition is a vital extension activity to showcase its resources for public viewing. Book exhibitions typically display newly acquired collections, rare books, subject-specific materials, recommended readings, and the latest publications from various publishers. According to the data, 44 staff members (72.13%) organise book exhibition events at their respective colleges, highlighting the significance of this activity in academic institutions.

Librarians Day

Institutions celebrate various national days to foster collaborative activities, and similarly, Librarian's Day can be observed annually on August 12th. This celebration encourages library engagement through guest lectures, panel discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions, emphasising the role of library collections in education. According to the table, 59 staff members (96.72%) actively participate in celebrating events at their respective colleges..

International Women's Day Celebration in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) commemorate International Women's Day annually on 8th March to recognise and raise awareness about women's social, economic, and cultural contributions. This initiative aims to empower individuals by sharing their stories, fostering motivation, and promoting gender equality.

Additionally, this effort highlights women's significant contributions to law, acknowledging their achievements and impact. According to the data, 40 staff members (65.57%) actively celebrate such events at their colleges.

Constitution Day, also known as Samvidhan Day, is observed annually on 26th November to commemorate the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1949. This initiative can help students, faculty, and visitors explore important books, legal documents, and reference materials on constitutional law, reinforcing the significance of India's constitutional principles. As per the table, 50 library staff (81.96%) are celebrating events at their colleges.

Organising Book Talk The event can be structured as a formal presentation, an informal discussion, or a combination of both. This activity ensures a meaningful conversation and outlines key themes and characters. This activity not only helps in criterion 4 but also other criteria. As per the table, staff members 23 (37.70%) celebrate events at their colleges.

A Library Brochure is a document that provides an overview of the library's resources, services, policies, and facilities. Also known as a User Guide, it is a reference for users to navigate the library effectively. As per the table, staff members, 23 (37.70%) have a brochure at their colleges,

Career Guidance Cell The Career Guidance Cell is an essential part of educational institutions, As per the table, staff members, 19 (31.14%), have a career Guidance cell at their colleges.

Training E-Resources Libraries should conduct training sessions annually or every semester to educate users about library resources and services. Known as Library Orientation or an Information Literacy Program, these sessions help new students familiarise themselves with the library collection, policies, rules, and regulations, ensuring practical usage of library resources. As per the table, 44 (72.13%) have a library orientation at their colleges.

6. FINDINGS

More than 50% of law college library staff have organised the Best User Award, Constitution Day, Women's Day Celebration, Librarians' Day, Book Exhibition, Promoting Reading Habits and organised Competitions.

Many law college libraries must adopt the following best practices: Training on E-Resources, creating a Career Guidance Cell, creating a Library Brochure, Organising Book Talks, etc. As we can find, only 1 college received an A+

7. SUGGESTIONS

To maximise their impact, librarians must actively engage with users and adapt to their evolving needs. Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science provide a timeless framework to guide these efforts. Here is how librarians can increase the usage of libraries, both physically and online, in alignment with these principles.

Physical Library - Best Practices

- **Colour Code for Resources**

As per Ranganathan's first law: Books are for use. The law library can organise its entire collection using a colour-coded system. Different colored strips can distinguish collection sections, such as Bare Acts, Textbooks, Journals, Reports, etc. This visual classification will help users easily identify and locate the needed material, enhancing their overall experience. This method allows users to quickly select books without confusion or difficulty, making the library more user-friendly and accessible.

- **Display Book jackets of new arrivals**

The third law says: Every book has its reader. To enhance the visit of library users, the librarian can put the Book jackets on the library notice board or in place of the library display. With the help of that jacket, the reader may get the details of the books and also be inspired to read the book.

- **Display the New Arrivals list /Books.**

The fourth law says: Save the reader's time. The librarian can display a list of books on the Library notice board, Library webpage, Library Blog or all library social networking sites. Users are updated with this list. To encourage the reading habit of library users,

Library Orientation – Semester-wise

To enhance the learning process, the library is the best tool to help users understand the concept of a specific topic. For new readers familiar with the library tools and e-resources, the Librarian can keep the Library orientation, which is also called the demonstration of library services and collection.

- **Book Exhibition**

The library can keep the book exhibition in different ways, like celebrating the Constitution Day, Labour Day, Language Day, etc.

- **Placement Notification**

The library notice board is where almost all students read. With the librarian's help, they can also put in the placement notification, which helps them with their career opportunities.

Make a unique space for the student's event.

The library can create a special place for students and users to organise events. With the help of this organisation, a committer librarian can organise library events, like book reviews, quizzes, Book exhibitions, Language day, etc.

Online Library-Best Practices

- **Library website**

It is a digital page that provides information about the library collection, resources, services, and administrative functions. It helps users to understand the various resources available in the library.

- **Social media**

Utilise platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook and Library Blogs to connect with users, share updates, and promote library events.

Whatsapp Group

Facebook page

Library Blogs

WhatsApp Group: A librarian can create groups of readers, which helps the library staff provide library information 24/7. Readers also connect with a librarian 24/7. With the help of this app, librarians can share library notices, new arrival lists, and new articles available in the library about new services offered by the library.

The Facebook page & Library Blog help to do the marketing of library events, notices and collections. Librarians need to create a library Facebook page and can post news and notices on the Facebook page.

8. CONCLUSION

Librarians must develop library services based on new technology and the new generation. As per the suggestion, librarians play various roles in the profession, like Event organiser for book exhibitions, competitions & motivator to encourage reading. Inculcating reading habits in readers is a more difficult task after the pandemic. Now, students are more techno-savvy, so the librarian must develop their skills and services. These studies help to understand the various best practices in the law college library. With the help of these practices and marketing skills, the library can increase offline and online library usage. Social media, websites, and email marketing promote library services and resources. With the help of users, the foot fall Institute can score full marks in the library section. By implementing these strategies, librarians can significantly increase best practices in libraries, both physically and online.

This proactive approach enhances the library's relevance and ensures it continues to grow and evolve with its users. With the help of this law, libraries can implement a 21st-century best practice in college libraries. The best practices adopted should bridge the gap between the library and the user for maximum utilisation of the resources. Libraries provide updates and the best services to users.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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