

Enhancing Academic Excellence: NAAC Accredited as A++ : Best Practices and Innovative Strategies Adopted in NGM College Library, Pollachi – An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

The library and information center of an institution is pivotal in promoting the dissemination and creation of new knowledge. In today's educational landscape, these centers have become increasingly integral to users, consuming more of their academic time and resources. It is essential to identify and implement innovative strategies that enhance library processes and activities, optimize resource use, and provide high-quality, value-added services to users. This paper examines the best practices and initiatives adopted by the NGM College library in Pollachi, highlighting various efforts such as the Earn While You Learn program, the Center for E-Learning, the Institutional Repository, readers' clubs, and the library portal. It also explores the overview that led to achieving A++ NAAC accreditation.

Introduction

Academic libraries worldwide hold significant importance in higher education. They provide a diverse array of services, from reference assistance to electronic information access, reflecting the evolution of this field. Since its establishment, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has focused on ensuring the quality of higher education, particularly over the past twenty years. The formation of the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in 1987 has led to a substantial increase in educational institutions, including numerous deemed universities and colleges, which require evaluation by experts in higher education. Consequently, the Government of India, UGC, and NAAC are deeply invested in enhancing educational standards and implementing best practices in universities, colleges, and their libraries.

The library and information center within a college play a crucial role in achieving the institution's educational objectives. College libraries stimulate reading by acquiring study and research materials, promoting open access, maintaining extended hours, and organizing resources systematically. They not only nurture students' intellectual growth but also support faculty research, thereby addressing the teaching and research needs of educators. Additionally, college libraries serve as a platform for disseminating information and related technologies, fostering best practices for user engagement and facilitating information exchange among users.

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Objective of the Study

This study aims to explore and analyze the best practices and innovative strategies implemented by the NGM College Library in Pollachi, which have led to its A++ accreditation by NAAC. Through empirical investigation, the study evaluates the effectiveness of these practices in enhancing academic excellence, supporting student learning, facilitating research, and promoting knowledge dissemination. The findings will offer insights into strategies that other academic institutions can replicate to achieve similar levels of excellence.

Review of Literature

Kathmann, M., & Lee, Y. Y. (2024) This paper outlines effective strategies for implementing best practices in academic libraries, highlighting the essential role of knowledge management (KM) in improving library operations and professional growth. It underscores the necessity of empirical research to explore the practical use of KM, drawing insights from the IT department of a university library. By embracing KM best practices, libraries can enhance service delivery, promote collaboration, and facilitate ongoing learning among staff, ultimately benefiting the academic community they serve

Bhagat, A., & Bhagat, P. (2024) The study examines best practices in the Arts and Science College libraries of Dindigul District, with a focus on improving user satisfaction for both students and faculty. It assesses the effectiveness of content management software, e-resources (such as Delnet and Nlist), and library awareness programs. Key findings indicate that innovative library services can significantly enhance the teaching and learning experience. Utilizing Garret ranking techniques, the study analyzes data collected from nine colleges, identifying areas for improvement and suggesting enhancements, such as electronic mail alerts for current affairs and job opportunities. Ultimately, the research emphasizes that the quality of library services relies on the implementation of best practices to achieve improved outcomes and meet accreditation standards.

Bhagat, A., & Bhagat, P. (2024) The paper examines the best practices adopted by the M. B. Patel Arts & Commerce College Library, focusing on the shift from traditional library services to ICT-based methods. It highlights the significance of automation, the development of a library website, and various extension services to enhance user accessibility and engagement. Despite challenges such as financial constraints and limited manpower, the library is committed to modernizing its services while preserving traditional practices, ultimately aiming to improve the quality of library services for students in rural areas. The article advocates for ongoing adaptation and user-centered approaches to meet the evolving needs of library users

About NGM College

Nallamuthu Gounder Mahalingam College is dedicated to providing quality education. To facilitate higher education for students from the high schools of Pollachi and Udumalpet Taluks, an organization called “Pollachi Kalvi Kazhagam” was established in 1957, under the leadership of Shri S.P. Nallamuthu Gounder as President and Arutchelvar Dr. N. Mahalingam as Secretary. The organization worked to establish a college in Pollachi. Shri C. Subramaniam, former Minister of Finance, showed great interest in this initiative. NGM College is affiliated

with Bharathiar University and has received NAAC accreditation of A++ (3.51/4) in its fourth cycle, with an NIRF ranking of 101-200 for the year 2024.

NGM College Library

The Bharat Ratna C. Subramaniam Centenary Library at NGM College is named in honor of Shri C. Subramaniam, the former Union Minister of Finance, who was instrumental in the establishment of the college. The library was founded alongside the institution in 1957 and is located in the eastern part of the sprawling campus, facing west. The Central Library aims to enhance readership and support research and academic activities by providing information services to all users. The library has a built-up area of 9,112.7 sq. ft. and can accommodate approximately 250 readers. As a central facility, it is fully automated with an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) system. The library's collection includes over 67,275 books, comprising 51,453 titles, as well as 75 journals and 45 magazines. Additionally, CD/DVDs, e-journals, online databases, and audio-video cassettes are available for reference, and the library is equipped with CCTV for security.

Library Collection

Total No of Books	67744
Total No of Titles	51453
Journals	75
Magazine	45
Back volumes	463
CD/DVDs	300
Thesis	512

E-Resources

- DELNET
- N-LIST –(Shodhsindu)
- NDL (National Digital Library)
- NPTEL (National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning)

Best Practices of NGM College Library

1. ICT Initiative
2. Current information Notice Board
3. Earn While You Learn Programme
4. Centre for E-Learning
5. Information Services with ICT
6. Readers' clubs
7. Herbal Preservation
8. Competitions Exam Question bank

9. Library Portal

1. ICT Initiative

ICT initiatives in libraries encompass a range of projects that use technology to enhance access to information, preserve cultural heritage, and improve library services. We have developed institutional repositories in omekha based Intuitional Repository NGM IR to store and share scholarly research, ensuring open access to academic work. While integrated library Management systems (ILMS) power by AUTOLIB library software streamline operations like cataloging and circulation. IRINS facilitates academic and research institutions, as well as individual faculty members and scientists, in collecting, curating, and showcasing their scholarly communication activities, thereby fostering the creation of scholarly networks.

2. Current information Notice Board

The Current Awareness Service is designed to keep users well-informed and up-to-date in their areas of interest and related subjects. It provides a system for accessing knowledge and information on recent developments, particularly those relevant to individual interests. We have established a Current Information Display classified into four categories: Innovation, Motivation, Current Awareness, and Career Guidance for our users..

3. Earn While You Learn Programme

The Bharat Ratna C. Subramaniam Centenary Library has launched the "Earn While You Learn" programme. This initiative allows students not only to financially support their studies but also to gain practical experience that will benefit their future careers. The programme offers part-time job opportunities and entrepreneurial projects, enabling students to earn while they learn. Students can earn Rs. 20 per hour.

4. Centre for E-Learning

The library should not be viewed merely as a digitized collection of information objects and related management tools, but as a learning environment that integrates collections, services, and people to support both learning and e-learning. This includes the entire cycle of creation, dissemination, use, and preservation of data, information, and knowledge. We have set intermediate goals for libraries on how they can support e-learning, including assistance with MOOCs and online certificate courses, guiding users from registration to certification.

5. Information Services with ICT

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has revolutionized libraries. All library activities, including acquisition, procurement, processing, organization, and dissemination of information services, are now computer-based. This has enabled us to provide ICT-based information services more effectively. We offer email newspaper clippings and utilize social networking technologies like WhatsApp and Facebook to deliver information services to our user

6. Readers' clubs

Readers' clubs are organized groups that bring individuals together to read, discuss, and share their thoughts on books, fostering a culture of reading and intellectual engagement. These clubs promote social interaction and community building by providing a platform for members to exchange ideas and explore diverse literary perspectives. Some clubs focus on specific genres, such as mystery, science fiction, or non-fiction, allowing readers to delve deeper into their interests. Libraries and educational institutions often support readers' clubs by organizing literary discussions, storytelling sessions, and author interactions. With the rise of digital platforms, many book clubs now operate online, enabling members to connect virtually and engage in discussions through social media or video meetings. Additionally, activities like reading challenges, literary quizzes, and writing competitions make participation more interactive and enjoyable. Readers' clubs play a crucial role in promoting literacy, critical thinking, and a lifelong passion for reading, transforming books into a shared and enriching experience for all.

7. Herbal Preservation

The aim of the Library's preservation activities is to extend the lifespan of its materials. Although most items in the collections are organic and contain elements that are prone to decay, it is possible to slow this deterioration and ensure their usability for future generations. To this end, we have incorporated herbal ingredients, including *Acorus Calamus* (Vasambu), black pepper, cloves, ajwain seeds, and camphor, which are baked in small cotton cloths.

8. Library Portal

A **library portal** is a digital gateway that offers users centralized access to a library's resources, services, and information. This online platform allows patrons to search for books, journals, e-books, databases, and multimedia materials, typically through an integrated search system. Many library portals feature personalized user accounts, enabling members to check book availability, reserve materials, renew loans, and access digital collections remotely. Additionally, they may provide research tools, citation guides, virtual reference services, and online catalogs (OPACs) to enhance the user experience. Some portals also integrate learning management systems, discussion forums, and academic repositories, making them essential for students, researchers, and general readers. By facilitating seamless access to both physical and digital resources, library portals play a crucial role in modern libraries, enhancing convenience, efficiency, and user engagement.

Conclusions

The library serves as the heart and soul, as well as the center of knowledge, for any institution. To meet the demands of the college user community, academic libraries must be equipped with need-based hybrid resources. In today's information society, implementing new ICT tools for library operations and service provision is essential. Adopting innovative and customized services, along with maintaining a friendly, enthusiastic, and skilled staff, significantly enhances the quality of library services. Developing best practices and regularly analyzing and revising them will contribute to the continuous improvement of the library's overall

performance, ultimately benefiting the institution's NAAC accreditation efforts, for which it has earned an A++ grade. Reflecting on the progress and accomplishments of the NGM College library is a source of pride. The positive impacts of best practices on the perceptions of students and faculty will encourage greater utilization of library resources and services in the future.

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