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THE CURRENT SCENARIO OF RURAL ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

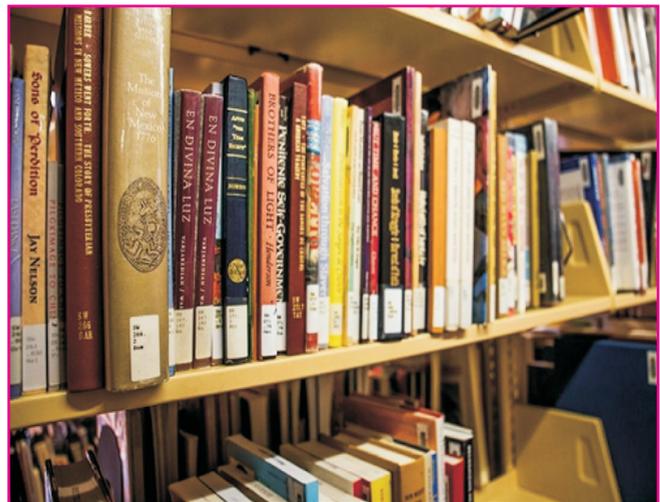
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ABSTRACT

With the anticipation of Information Communication Technology Academic Libraries are changing in each and every manner. The various ICT tools are now being used to carry out various library functions like processing information, storing information, retrieving information and disseminating information. Unfortunately the number of academic libraries of rural area is still functioning traditionally.

KEY WORDS: Academic Libraries , Information Communication Technology, academic programmes.



INTRODUCTION

There are very few academic libraries in rural area which ICT enabled and provides electronic information resources and other services. Academic libraries support teaching, learning, research and other academic programmes. For these purpose any academic library must provide its service electronically and increase the electronic collection of the library. To satisfy the needs of students, teachers and researchers, academic libraries of rural area have to be changed and must adopt computer and other ICT tools to provide internet based service.

ROLE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARY:

The Academic Library plays a significant role in new learning paradigm. The academic libraries become one of the potential learning environments that function at the various educational institutions. It is an integral part of any educational system. The Academic libraries provide the access to print and non-print reading materials to aspiring students and teachers. Academic libraries outfit exclusively to the educational requirements of a school, college or university where it is located, for the ease of the students teachers and researchers. By considering the educational benefits of the students, teachers and researchers, the Academic libraries are must be fully and comprehensively equipped with vast collection of the reading material to fulfill the need of information on all subjects that form part of their curriculum.

Present Situation:

In present situation number of academic libraries of rural area doesn't have proper facilities to fulfill the needs of their users. The collection of these academic libraries is not up to date and provision of budget also negligible. In rural area many times it's found that there is no adequate space for library or library hall/reading room is not available, so students find difficulty to do proper use of library. These libraries give only book lending

service to students. In several libraries no systematic classification is followed for the arrangement of available collection. And in most college libraries there is total darkness even in day time. Some libraries are visually unattractive, that's why the use of library is suffers.

The academic libraries can be a tool in student's overall development and teacher's profession development because libraries promote information literacy and also provide several resources and services. So it's a responsibility of librarian and library staff that every user who comes to the library gets the satisfactory service.

Obstacles in optimal use of Academic Libraries:

- + Lack of ICT tools and unavailability of E-resources.
- + Lack of knowledge of the new technologies.
- + Poor services of the library.
- + Outdated collection.
- + Close access.
- + Library staff's rude or unprofessional behavior.
- + Partial response to student's request.
- + Failed to do optimum use of Internet.

INCREASING LIBRARY USE:

Information Literacy Programme:

There is need to organize Information Literacy Programmes because of which users can acquire the knowledge of accessing, evaluating and using information from various forms of sources. The users must know how to handle the reference resources like dictionaries, encyclopedias and other information sources to find specific information regarding the query. Tool literacy is also important because reading materials now are being published in electronic format, so users must acquire the knowledge to access electronic resources, search engines, online database. It will definitely help to increase the use of any academic library.

Adequate Reading Materials:

To accomplish the needs of students, teachers and researchers librarian must increase the electronic resource, e-books and add more relevant journals/magazines so they keep themselves up to date by using it.

Electronic Resources:

To attract the users, in particular researchers the collection of e-resource must be increased. Academic Library must have access to the various online databases, consortia's, subscribe online journals.

Healthy Library Atmosphere:

The unstructured and non-decorated library failed to attract the users. Library must be more comfortable and attractive place to visit. The arrangement of shelves must be systematic for proper brightness and ventilation.

Healthy Communication:

For enhancing the use of library it's essential to boost healthy communication between library staff and users, and its responsibility of librarian. Rude and unprofessional behavior, biased responses really affects the library use. So to avoid this librarian must implement some programmes to increase communication between the library staff and students.

Motivation:

Motivation is the important factor to increasing reading habit and enhancing library use. Best practices like a Reading Competition. Best Reader Award helps to motivate students to read.

Interpretation of Library Services:

Users must know about the services available in the library, for that interpretation of the library services is important. Librarian should work out the interpretation of library services plan using talented student's help to arrange exhibition, to do art and sign work, and to keep library attractive. Students must know what is Book Bank Service, Inter-Library Loan Service, Current Awareness Service and other services available in the library.

Library Instructional Programme:

The Library Instructional Programme provides the various opportunities and meaningful learning experience to the students. This programme enhances their reading skills. Library Instructional programme helps students to acquire better skills in using books and other reading materials. This programme increases the interest in reading and appreciation about books. Library Use Instruction should be given to the first year students at the beginning of the every academic year.

Library Orientation programme:

Library Orientation Programme provides easy and quick introduction about the operations and services available in the library. By the Library Orientation programme students will get the introductory information about the library services, physical layout of the library, arrangement of books.

CONCLUSION:

The Academic Libraries from the rural area are not being used by users because they are not aware about the library and its services or maybe they are not satisfied with the services which are provided by the library. So it's a duty of librarian to attract these users towards the library and make them familiar with the library. For increasing the use of library librarian must render effective services to students and also organize the orientation programmes, exhibitions and display the new arrivals to create awareness of the services. Academic library should keep open two or three hours before opening and two or three hours after the closing time of institution. For meeting the educational needs and overall development of users, library must improve their collection regularly. Library should provide the audiovisual reading materials in the library so it will increase the student's interest.

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