



**Best Practices in Library and Information Science: A study of Vidya Pratishthan's Arts
Science And Commerce College Vidyanagari, Baramati.**

Dr.Jagtap Alka Balasaheb
V. P. Arts Science and Commerce College,
Vidyanagari, Baramati, Pune. (M.H.)

Abstract:

The present article examines the best practices implemented at VidyaPratishthan's Arts Science and Commerce College Library, with emphasis on the role of libraries in teaching-learning processes, research activities, and the cultivation of reading culture in higher education. The study highlights ICT-based initiatives, extension activities, user awareness programs on e-resources, and the enhancement of physical infrastructure and library services. Special attention is given to the challenges faced by students from rural backgrounds who often encounter difficulties in accessing computerized library services due to limited digital literacy. Less trained staff, budget curtailment, information explosion, ICT based e-resources, maintenance of consortia, database, and use of social media by the users are among some additional barriers. The study discusses the concept and definition of best practices, guidelines for Best practices in Library and Information Centre aligning with NAAC guidelines. It covers book exhibitions, orientation programs, new arrivals display, extended library hours, staff-user interactions, competitive examination guidance center, center of excellence, library information manual, training in the use of e-resources, UtkrushtGranthVachanSpardha, open access systems, reading hall, book reviews, book talk programs, readers' club, best user award, departmental reading cards, Braille Books, rear book collections, resource sharing, inter-library loan (ILL), bulletin boards, feedback systems, counselingcenter for competitive examinations, and author interactions. NAAC-oriented initiatives such as WebOPAC services and donated books sections



are also highlighted. This paper serves as a practical guide for academic libraries seeking to adopt innovative and sustainable practices to enhance effective library management and user engagement.

Keywords: Best Practices, WEBOPAC, College Library, ICT, User Education, NAAC library and information center, Open Access

Introduction:

Libraries play an important social and educational role in supporting academic growth, knowledge dissemination, and lifelong learning. In the present information age, an enormous volume of information is generated continuously, making it essential for libraries to adopt modern methods to organize, manage, and provide access (1). Academic libraries are no longer limited to traditional functions but have transformed into dynamic knowledge centres that provide digital access to digital resources, online databases, and ICT-enabled services to meet the evolving needs of users (2).

The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has significantly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of library services. ICT facilitates faster information access, resource sharing, automated library operations and improved communication with users thereby enhancing the overall quality of library services (3). The adoption of innovative and ICT-based best practices helps academic libraries optimize resources, reduce operational costs, and provide value-added services to the user community (4).

Best practices in academic libraries play an important role in improving service quality, increasing user satisfaction, and strengthening the contribution of libraries to teaching, learning and research activities. These practices include user orientation programmes, information literacy training, use of Web-OPAC, institutional repositories, and awareness programmes about e-resources (5).

Additionally, modern libraries are increasingly adopting emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, digital repositories, and automated services to improve service delivery and enhance user experience (6). Despite the advancements, academic libraries face several challenges such as lack of ICT skills among users, financial limitations, and shortage of trained staff (7). Therefore, it becomes essential for academic libraries to adopt innovative best practices to improve their services and meet user expectations effectively.



The present study focuses on the best practices adopted by the library of VidyaPratishthan's Arts Science and Commerce College, Baramati, Maharashtra. The study highlights ICT-based services, user awareness programmes, and innovative practices implemented to enhance library services and support teaching, learning and research activities.

Definitions

Best practices

The concept of best practices has gained significant importance in academic institutions, particularly in the context of quality assurance and continuous improvement. According to the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), a best practice is defined as 'an innovative and effective practice, strategy, programme, process, or activity that contributes to institutional excellence by solving problems, improving efficiency, or creating new opportunities, and positively impacting stakeholders' (Manual 2023). Institutional excellence is achieved through the systematic implementation of such best practices across various academic and administrative functions.

Academic Libraries/college library

An academic library, also known as a college library, is an integral part of a higher institution that supports the teaching, learning, and research needs of students, faculty, and researchers. Academic libraries provide access to print and digital resources, organize information systematically, and offer various user-oriented services to facilitate academic activities (8).

Review of literature

Wadnerkar(2014) conducted a study on reaccredited colleges in Maharashtra to examine best practices followed by college libraries. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The study found that library automation and ICT-enabled services significantly improved the quality and efficiency of library services. The author also emphasized the importance of user awareness and orientation programmes to ensure effective utilization of modern library resources(9).



Vanaja(2024) carried out a case study in Vemagal, Kolar under the title ‘Best practices in college Libraries: A case Study’. The study examined both traditional and ICT-based best practices implemented in the library. The findings revealed that continuous implementation of innovative practices such as user-oriented services and resource promotion activities, increased library usage and improved the image of the library among users. The study concluded that innovative best practices help create a positive environment and improve overall library effectiveness (10).

Saroja (2022) highlighted the importance of adopting innovative best practices in academic libraries to improve service quality and user satisfaction. Their studies emphasized that best practices act as quality enhancement strategies that support efficient library management and effective service delivery(4).

Sathe(2015) discussed the concept and importance of best practices in academic libraries and highlighted various user-oriented programmes conducted by college libraries. The study emphasized that innovative practices improve library performance and help libraries meet changing user needs.

Jotwani(2008)examined best practices in academic libraries with a focus on resource development, collection management, and ICT-enabled services such as Web-OPAC, digital repositories, and library portals. The author noted that best practices help libraries identify performance gaps, improve service quality, and create new opportunities. The study also emphasized that best practices should evolve continuously to meet changing user expectations (11).

Sundareshwari (2015) highlighted the major challenges faced by academic libraries in India, including limited budgets, rising costs of library materials, lack of user awareness, and insufficient skills to access digital resources. The study emphasized the need for adopting innovative and ICT-based practices to overcome these challenges and improve library services.

Best practices at the library of VidyaPratishthan’s Arts Science and Commerce College

VidyaPratishthan’s Arts, Science and Commerce College (VPASCC) was established in 1994 and affiliated with Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU), Pune. The college has been accredited with an A+ grade by NAAC in its fourth cycle. The college library functions as a Knowledge Resource Centre (KRC) supporting teaching, learning and research activities of approximately 3026 students and 500 faculty and staff members.



The library building is centrally located on the campus and is spread over 3333.33 sq.m across three floors. It is designed to be spacious, user-friendly and disability-friendly. The infrastructure includes reading halls accommodating nearly 1000 users, separate AC and non-AC reading cubicles, an audio-visual room, a Competitive Examination Guidance Centre (CEGC), and an Internet and Information Communication Facility Centre (ICFC) equipped with 20 computers. The building includes ramp facilities for physically challenged users, recreational reading spaces, garden reading areas, and rainwater harvesting as a part of green library practices.

Security is maintained through 37 CCTV cameras and professional security personnel. The library operates six days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and remains open on Sundays and public holidays for competitive examination aspirants from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Reading room hours are extended during examinations.

Resource development and collection management

The library maintains a rich and diverse collection comprising over 85600 titles in print, digital and online formats, along with 73 periodicals and 16 national and two local newspapers. The collection supports undergraduate, postgraduate and competitive examination needs.

A significant feature is the Donated Books Section containing over 23000 books, including 21712 titles donated by Hon. Sharad Pawar, 500 books contributed by visiting faculty Prof. K.S. Iyyer and 980 books by Dr. Arun Adsool. The library also houses rare books and manuscripts, a junior college section, a periodical section and a dedicated competitive examination collection. To support economically weaker students, a Book Bank Scheme is implemented for junior college students. Under this scheme, complete sets of books (approximately 456 sets annually) are issued at nominal charges and returned after examinations for reuse.

Automation and ICT-enabled services

The library is fully automated using AUTOLIB software under an Integrated Library Management System (ILMS). Services are accessible through WEBOPAC, which is available 24x7 and allows users to search the catalogue, reserve books, access question papers and obtain information about new arrivals and events.

The library subscribes to N-LIST e-resources through INFLIBNET, DELNET and provides access to Jayakar Library (SPPU). Users are also guided to access national academic platforms such as the National Digital Library of India (NDLI), NPTEL and Shodhganga.

The ICFC provides 20 computers with internet connectivity for students and faculty. Regular training sessions and workshops are conducted to familiarize users with N-LIST, e-resources and WebOPAC. Data of the library holdings are shared with DELNET to facilitate Inter-Library Loan (ILL) services.

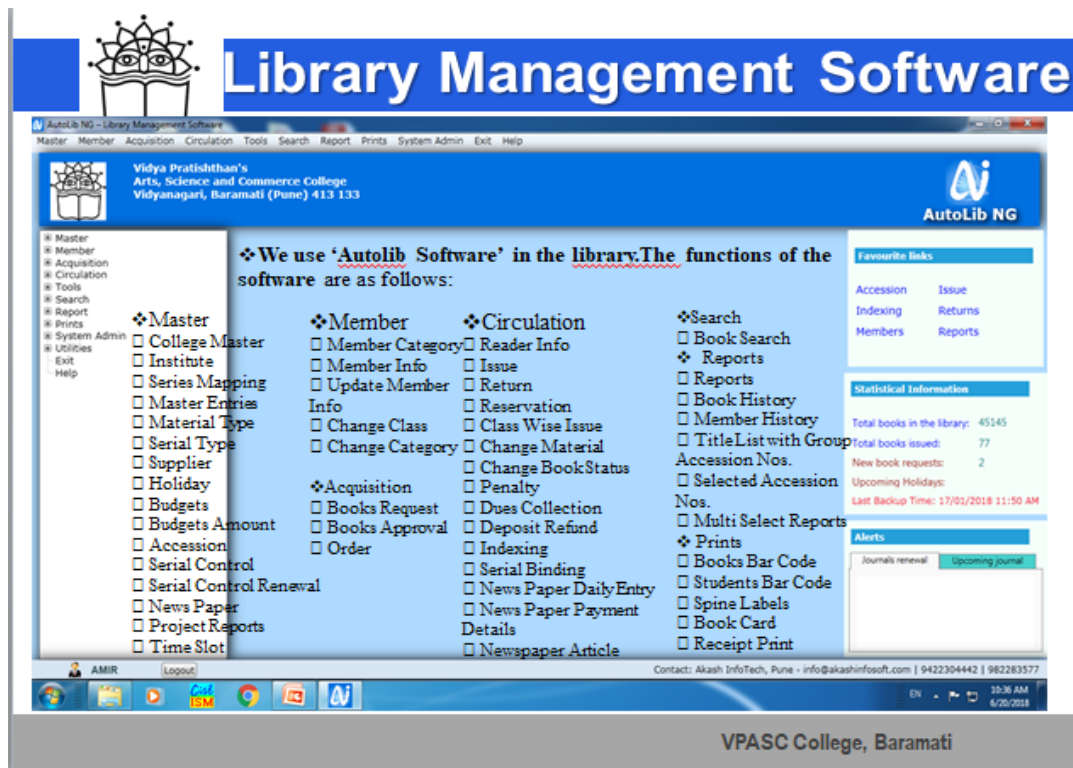


Figure 1: Library Management Software

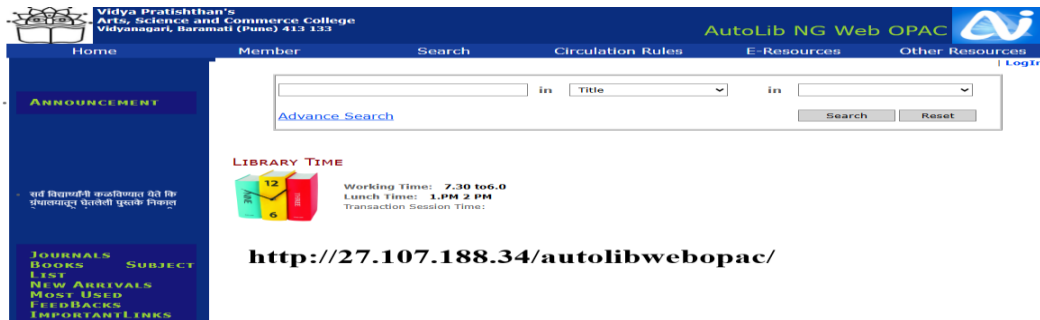


Figure 2:webopac



Webopac: webopac Address: <http://27.107.188.34/autolibwebopac/> through this users can access our webopac resources e.g. important links are provided and e-resources link is also provided, question paper, search facility for library holding news, and events, reservation of books can be N-List Subscription :

Provides access to e-books and e-journals.e-databases INFLIBNET E-Resources: <https://www.inflibnet.ac.in/> WEBOPAC : The WebOPAC (Web-based Online Public Access Catalogue) is an online system that provides access to a library's catalogue of books, journals, multimedia, and other resources. It allows users to search, reserve, and sometimes renew items from the library's collection via the internet. It is available 24*7 on mobile anywhere, anytime

Library WEBOPAC for efficient searching of physical books and digital resources

WEBOPAC Link - <http://27.107.188.34/autolibwebopac/> we have provided QR Code for above service National Digital Library of INDIA -: <https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/>

NPTEL :-<https://onlinecourses.nptel.ac.in/>

DELNET - <https://delnet.in>

SHODHGANGA -: <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>

Journals update available users are allowed to ask librarian, suggestion , feedback facility

ICFC: internet facility centre through this centre we provide the computer, internet connection with 20 PC's for student and teachers webopac, and to access Inflibnet, Delnet,

Audio –Visual: audio visual room is available to arrange the programmes for students and staff

CEGC: Competitive Examination Guidance Centre is in the library

Donated Section

Junior college section

Section : 1. Periodical Section, property counter, Security , Cctv, Recreation Section, Paper Reading section,



Special features: Open Access, Only one entrance, recreational room, Hindi –English Marathi, Classification, Green library practices, feedback form of students, stocking taking in house book card printing, Ramp for physically handicapped, Book display, question paper, webopac, book bank scheme, A/v Cassettes, notice board, rain water harvesting, center of excellence, Competitive examination center, career katta, user tracking system, garden recreation and reading space. Drinking water facility, NDLI, NPTEL,

Other activities we arrange Nearby School and Colleges Library tours are arranged,

Interlibrary loan facility: we provide the services like inter library loan to our sister institute and Schools of villages and try to bring them to the library by visiting their school with movable book Van and by delivering lectures to them on the importance of reading.

Outside membership: we provide the membership to outsiders with the permission of higher authorities

Library orientation programme: to know the rules and regulations and library facilities we arrange library orientation programmes for newly admitted students.

Other Activities: Earn and learn Scheme in our library through the Earn and Learn scheme we provide training to the students. Nearly 50 students work in the library and help us to make them capable for skill development.

Library Committee: this committee helps book selection, purchasing, and solve the problems of library and take a good decision for the benefit of students and teachers

Project Assistance Question Paper Set. Reading Room Facility Reference Service for others

Departmental library, card., Overnight night book facility. Competitive Examination books. Reading room service facility. General reading./Facility. Inter Library Loan. Ramp Physically Handicapped: Ramp Facilities provided for physically handicapped staff and Student

User services and facilities

The library follows user-centric processes to ensure efficient service delivery. It operates on an open access system, allowing both staff and students to freely browse and select materials from the shelves. An overnight book facility is provided to support study requirements, majorly during examination periods. Departmental library cards are issued for third-year students and faculty to facilitate easier access.



The library also offers comprehensive reference and project assistance services. Question paper sets are maintained and made available for examination preparation. In addition to academic material, general reading facilities are provided to encourage broader reading. ILL services help with accessing resources beyond the institution's own collection and outside membership is granted with administrative approval.

Display of new arrivals and best-selling books is conducted through mobile display stands to enhance user awareness. The library provides assistance for book reading competitions, seminars and academic events.

User education and orientation

User education is an integral component of library's best practices.

Display and Guidance services:

New arrivals of books and journals are systematically displayed. Guide plates and subject guides are arranged for DDC classification and section-wise organization. Clear signage based on subjects and language facilitates quick access and saves users' time.

Induction program:

An annual library induction program is conducted for newly admitted students. Powerpoint presentations are used to explain the collections, services, automation systems, and the rules and regulations of the library.

Website and information dissemination:

Library information forms and links to resources and services are made available on the institutional website. Similar information is provided in the library brochure and prospectus to ensure wider awareness.



Inclusive and support services

The library provides special facilities for physically challenged users, including Braille books (36 titles) for visually impaired students and ramp access for easy mobility. Recreational spaces and open reading areas promote a comfortable learning environment.

Security and preservation measures include 32 CCTV surveillance systems and BVG2 security and annual pest control treatment to protect collections. A controlled entry system and property counter enhance the security management.

Reading promotion and innovative practices

The library actively promotes a strong reading culture through a series of structured and sustained initiatives. One of the prominent programs is ‘AtharaTaasSalagVachan’ (18-hour continuous reading program) organised on the occasion of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s death anniversary to encourage prolonged and focused reading among students. Similarly, ‘VachanPrerana Din’ is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, inspiring students through motivational talks and collective reading activities. The observance of ‘Constitution Day’ is marked by reading sessions and awareness programs that promote constitutional values and civic responsibility.

The ‘UtkrushthaGranthVachanSpardha’ initiated in 2002, is conducted annually with the objective of enhancing students’ reading and writing skills. The competition recognizes excellence by awarding six prizes each year and acknowledged by NAAC as a best practice during the first accreditation cycle. In addition, morning reading sessions introduced in 2010 commence at 6:00 a.m. providing a disciplined and focused environment that nurtures consistent reading habits.

Beyond campus-based initiatives, the library organizes seminars, competitions and outreach programs for nearby schools and colleges. ILL services are extended to sister institutions and rural schools, and outreach efforts include book van visits and lectures emphasizing the importance of reading, thereby strengthening community engagement and promoting literacy beyond the institution.



Governance and Management

The library advisory committee meets regularly to plan budgets (annual allocation of ₹5,00,000), book selection, procurement, utilization and maintenance. The committee also reviews user feedback and ensures effective resource management.

Nearly 50 students participate annually in the Earn and Learn scheme, receiving training in library operations and skill development.

Conclusion

In today's technology-driven world, the influence of social media and instant online searching has deeply changed the way student's access information. Many learners prefer mobile phones and search engines for quick answers, and as a result physical visit to libraries have reduced. This creates challenges for librarians, who need to rethink traditional approaches and develop strategies to reconnect students to structured resources.

At the same time, this changing environment offers valuable opportunities. Instead of finding ways to go back to traditional approaches, academic libraries can integrate digital tools with engaging initiatives. Conducting orientation sessions, trainings, reading competitions, and ICT-based services become the new help. Online services save time and cost, and structured reading programs cultivate depth, concentration and critical thinking.

Ultimately, the future of academic libraries depends on their ability to adapt while preserving their core mission. At VPASCC library, we have made a small attempt at this. The implementation of best practices has allowed a balanced combination of automation, e-resource access, user education, outreach programmes, and innovative reading activities.

Implication of Study

The present study has practical significance for librarians and administrators involved in planning and delivering academic library services. It offers a structured understanding of how systematic best practices can enhance the effective utilization of library collections and services. By integrating automation, digital access platforms, and user-oriented programs, libraries can



expand their academic reach and improve service and responsiveness. Institutions seeking to review, redesign or strengthen their resource management strategies may use this case as a guiding framework for improving user management.

Additionally, the study highlights the critical role of librarians in promoting reading culture through academic and co-curricular activities. Sustained efforts in this direction can significantly contribute to enhancing the academic environment and reinforcing the central role of the library within higher education institutions.

References

1. Singh BP, Madhusudhan M. ICT Based Research Support Services in Academic Libraries: A New Frontier to Enhancing Research Integrity and Productivity. *Journal of Knowledge & Communication Management*. 2022;12(2):128–49.
2. Velmurugan DVS. Information technology effect on academic libraries. *Int J Eng Comput Sci*. 2024;6(2):48–50. doi:10.33545/26633582.2024.v6.i2a.124
3. Pagore RB. Impact of ICT on academic libraries: Challenges for library professionals. *IP Indian Journal of Library Science and Information Technology*. 2025 Jul 20;9(2):128–31. doi:10.18231/j.ijlsit.2024.020
4. Saroja JS. Innovative Best Practices in Academic Libraries. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*. 2022 Jul 20;7(6):1408-1410. doi:10.5281/zenodo.6865080
5. Jaytakar ST, Pal A. LAW COLLEGE LIBRARIES' BEST PRACTICES TO ENCOURAGE USAGE OF LIBRARY: OFFLINE & ONLINE SERVICES. *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*. 2024 Jun 30;5(1):3083–9. doi:10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.6261
6. Hussain A. Use of artificial intelligence in the library services: prospects and challenges. *Library Hi Tech News*. 2023 Jan 10;40(2):15–7. doi:10.1108/LHTN-11-2022-0125



7. Hussain A. Use of artificial intelligence in the library services: prospects and challenges. Library Hi Tech News. 2023 Jan 10;40(2):15–7. doi:10.1108/LHTN-11-2022-0125
8. Sarkar T, Banerjee S. Role of Libraries in Higher Education: A review of Literature. Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal) [Internet]. 2023 Jan 1. Available from: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/8044>
9. Wadnerkar VB. Best Practices to Enhance the Services and Skills in Academic Libraries: A Study of Reaccredited Colleges in Maharashtra. Asian Journal of Managerial Science. 2014 Oct 23;3(2):40–5. doi:10.51983/ajms-2014.3.2.1159
10. N VM. BEST PRACTICES IN COLLEGE LIBRARIES: A CASE STUDY. IJLIS. 2021 Dec 30;10(3):35–41.
11. Jotwani D. Best Practices in a Modern Library and Information Center - The Case of Central Library, IIT Bombay.