Benchmarks for library services in view of NAAC framework

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Abstract – Present world is of changing very fast. Information technology changing the scenario of whole world and creating drastic changes in every field of human life. Likely in higher education institutions (HEI) changes are required to cope with present scenario of competition. Our government also trying to compete with the higher education institutes of developed countries. For that it is mandatory to accreditate the education institute by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). NAAC framed guidelines for this assessment and accreditation process. There are seven different criteria for this process. In fourth criterion weightage is given to library and its services. These guidelines helps to ensure a pathway to progressive model but one can take efforts to create remarble milstones or benchmarks for the system. The present paper deals with such benchmarks the library services which cope with the NAAC framework.

Library is called as heart of any educational institution. According to law of library science it is an growing organism. Due to introduction of information technology drastic changes are seen in the library services. In present situation which is occurred due covid 19, we suffered from many difficulties. Specially educational institutes still facing so many difficulties regarding teaching and learning process.

The situation gives as chance to face forthcoming challenges. Online teaching and learning become need of present situation. Library being part and parcel of teaching and learning process, it is necessary for it to cope with the changes. Traditional services of library will not fulfill the need of users. NAAC suggested some guideline i.e. quality indicators in library and information services for universities and autonomous colleges which includes

- Management of library and information services
- Working days of library, timings of library
- Library advisory committee
- Development of manpower
- Library infrastructure
- Use of ICT
- Library budget
- Collection and services of library
- Use of library services
- Best practices of library

All above quality indicators are also applicable to affiliated institutes of higher education. NAAC define library as a support system in teaching and learning process. So library shouldering the responsibility in higher education. NAAC includes in fourth criterion i.e. infrastructure and learning resources of key indicators of assessment and accreditation process.

The key indicator i.e. 4.2 having weightage of 20 marks

Name of criteria	Key indicators	Universities	Autonomes college	Attilated constituted colleges	
				UG	PG
4. Infrastructure of learning resources	4.1 Physical facilities	30	30	30	20
	4.2 Library as learning resources	20	20	20	20
	4.3 IT infrastructure	30	30	30	30
	4.4 Maintenance of campus infrastructure	20	20	20	20
			Total	100	

Table 1
Source – Manual of NAAC for affiliated/constituted UG and PG colleges (Revised w.e.f. 1 Jan. 2020 onwords)

From above table it can be noticed that out of total weightage allotted to 4th criterion, 20% weightage is given to the library and its services. But in the assessment and accreditation process every criteria has its equal importance which contribute in

overall grading of the institution. So library is also having equal importance in the framework of NAAC accreditation process. Following indicators will be helpful for benchmarking the library and its services.

- Separate library building having central position in the campus of the institution.
- Update collection of library
- Automation of library services
- Linkages with other libraries
- Following of best practices of library
  o Placement and guidance cell for students
  o Readers clubs
  o Book exhibition
  o Special deposit scheme
  o Orientation of users to library services
  o Organization guest lectures
  o Display new arrivals
  o Manpower development

Benchmarks of any library and its services specially academic library may be identified through the above indicator.

Physical infrastructure of library –

Library building should be separate and located centrally in campus to access easily. It may have the following amenities of section having full scope for future extension as library is growing organism.

- Library building with proper ventilation and sufficient number of fan and coolers.
- Availability of drinking water and toilet.
- Separate section for lending.
  o Reading space for students and faculty.
  o Special provision for Divyang persons.
- Separate section for periodical.
  o References sections
  o Technical section
- Store room
- Provision of power backup.

There is should be routine cleaning of library.

Training Programme –

Information technology is changing day to day. Library services also affected by new technology. If requires updation of knowledge of library professionals. To cope with new technology and changes, there is need of frequent training to library staff. Orientation or training programmes should be organized by library. Permission should be given by the authority to actend the related training programmes.

Library services –

This key indicator is very important to measure the efficiency of any library. The available information sources should be utilized by the users at maximum extent. The traditional services given by the library will not fulfill the requirement of users. As per the rule of library science i.e. save the time of user, prompt services are expected by the library.

Following services should be ensured by the library.
  o OPAC
  o Internet facility
  o Book Bank Scheme
  o N-LIST/membership of INFLIBNET
  o Resource sharing / Interlibrary loan facility
  o User orientation
  o Current content service
  o Digital library
  o Services for researches as special deposit scheme

Modern or updated library services enrich the status of it.

Information Resources –

Collection development of library play vital role in the richness of library. Resources may in the printed form or non print or online electronic material. It includes books, references, periodicals, e-resources live CDs/DVDs, audio, video material, rare material, books and other information sources useful for the students who seek to prepare for the various competitive examinations. Policy of collection development should be discussed in the meeting of library advisory committee. Strength and quality of library holding also depends upon the weeding out policy. Subscription of N-LIST will also enrich the information resources of the library.

In present situation due to covid-19, there are big challenges before libraries to dessiminatey the information to the users.

Best practices of the library –

This quality indicator is again playing very important role in benchmarking the library services following practices can be recognized by the library to benchmark the quality services of the library.

1. Publication of library brochure and its distribution amongst the users.
2. Organisation of users orientation programme.
3. Best user award.
4. Feedback from users.
5. It urges to introduce online services by the library access of e-resources is need of today.
6. Current awareness
7. Creating institutional repository
8. Creating separate library web page
9. Display of new arrivals (books & periodicals)
10. Inter library loan facility
11. Internet facility
12. Guidance and placement cell
13. Book exhibition
14. Display of new thoughts daily on notice board of library.
15. Reader clubs and reading ambessadors.
16. Library suggestion box.
17. Organisation of lectures of experts from various field.

Conclusion - It is true that, it not feasible to practice for all libraries but following of such best practices will definitely leads to benchmarking the library. Finally it whole concluded that library play also very important role in assessment and accreditation process.

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