

INNOVATIVE LIBRARY SERVICES IN COLLEGE LIBRARIES

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Abstract: - In today ICT era, libraries are changing drastically. Librarians have to face new challenges, meet the user's new demands in the digital age, so the need of innovative services is required in the library. This paper explores the innovations in today's library services and significance of innovative library services.

This paper described in briefly concept of innovation, why innovation is required in library services? Need and importance of innovative library services etc. This paper also described in briefly various innovative library services which can be implemented in a college library. Paper also throw light on Innovation through Open Source Software for library services, Innovation in library services, Use of internet and Web technology in library services. Paper also mentioned Impact of innovations in library services and Recommendations to libraries for improving innovative library services.

Keywords: Library services, Innovation, Libraries IT, ICT, Innovative Library Services, Digital Library, Virtual Library etc.

Introduction:

Libraries have long served as custodian of knowledge providing resources, services and spaces for learning and exploration. However, with the rapid advancements in technology and changing user expectations, traditional library services must adapt to remain relevant in the digital age. Innovative library services encompass a range of approaches and strategies that leverage technology, creative programming and community partnerships to enhance user experiences and bridge the digital divide.¹

Innovation is a complex process of introducing new ideas into use or practice.²

Innovative library services are those that incorporate new technology, tools or approaches to better serve the needs of library users such as Digital library or Virtual library.³

Innovation is most commonly defined as a change towards renovation or adoption of something new and useful in the practice. In 1934 Joseph Schumpeter identifies five main causes of innovation. There are many types of innovations like product innovations, technological innovations, organizational innovations and social innovations. Library innovation is a system of new ideas proposed by creative thinking professionals or by a team. One of the main

directions of innovative library activities is the automation and mechanization of technological process.⁴

Overall, innovative library services are designed to make library resources and services more accessible and convenient for users. By incorporating new technologies and approaches, libraries can better serve the needs of their communities and help users to achieve their goals.⁵

Why Library Innovation?

Innovation: The term change and innovation are often used interchangeably. An innovation or a change is traditionally defined as any idea, practice or object which is seen to be new by the individual or the organization either adopting it or rejecting it.⁶

Due to dramatic changes in the information environment and the ICT sector, Library managers have interest not only in adapting to these sweeping changes. But more importantly in triggering innovative ideas from their personnel with a view to remain at the frontiers of knowledge rather than more passive observers. Contrary to popular notions, librarians have always been among the first to adopt and use the latest handling information & communication technologies. The range and complexity of challenges facing libraries and librarians today are unprecedented.⁶

The library is shifting its focus from concentrating on supply towards what is asked for by its customers. In correspondence with this

trend, information reference is becoming more & more significant. The library acquires a gateway function, referring to information irrespective of the location where it has been physically stored. As a result of growing internet availability, the library services are blending with teaching process. A similar trend can be observed in the process of research.⁶

Need & Importance:

Today's library user's expect seamless access to information, personalized services and engaging experiences. Innovative library services address these expectations by employing emerging technologies, user centered design principles and collaborative partnership to create dynamic and interactive spaces for learning, collaboration and discovery.⁷

Objectives of innovative library services are⁷

1. To examine the evolving needs and expectations of library users in the digital age.
2. To assess the impact of innovative library services in enhancing access to information and promoting digital inclusion.
3. To explore the role of innovative library services in fostering user engagement, creativity and lifelong learning.
4. To analyze case studies and best practices of libraries that have successfully implemented innovative services.

5. To evaluate the effectiveness of specific innovative library services in meeting user needs and achieving desired documents.
6. To provide recommendations and guidelines for libraries seeking to implement or improve innovative services based on research findings.

Bridging the Digital Divide:

In an increasingly digital world, libraries play a crucial role in bridging the digital divide by providing equitable access to information and technology. Innovative services such as digital literacy programs, mobile libraries and virtual resources empower underserved communities, promoting digital inclusion and empowering individuals to participate fully in society.⁷

Enhancing User Engagement:

Innovative library services promote active user engagement by offering interactive programming, maker spaces, multimedia resources and immersive technologies. These services not only attract and retain library users but also foster lifelong learning, creativity and innovation.⁷

Innovative Library Services:

Following are some innovative library services which can implement or adopted in college libraries.

1) Digital Library:

Today libraries are being changed in tune with time and technology used. The advent of IT has paved the way of reducing the size of the libraries from biggest to very small. The smallness of the libraries is due to the digitization of information. Today, the resources are available mostly in electronic forms and their functions are accomplished automatically. These libraries termed by so many terms such as electronic library, digital library, desktop library, virtual library, library without walls, paperless library etc.⁸

Digital libraries are based on digitized data that has gradually replaced paper based records. These libraries are heterogeneous in nature. These include work related to information and how to digitize, store, find, link, visualize, use, publish, manage and share information. They provide instant access to digitized information by utilizing the avenues of information technology. The invention of CD-ROM in 1980's was turning point in the digitization of information. The year 1990's marked a progressive move towards digitization due to networking, electronic document delivery services, online services etc.⁸

2. Virtual Library:

Virtual library is a library without resources but resources simply may be a collection of web resources. This is a library with no physical presence of books and periodicals, reading space or supporting staff but it is one that disseminate information directly to the distributed

users, usually electronically. The virtual library is the output of virtual" reality. The virtual library is created in hypermedia. For creating virtual library, a graphic representation of the total architecture of the library in different angels from different distances is created by the user. So the user feels that as it he is moving inside the library when he moves the mouse.⁹

3) Remote Access to E-Resources:

The main aim of any library is to enhance the teaching, learning and research process. By installing information delivery system, we can provide services & access collections to the users.¹⁰

4) Ask a Librarian:

All the libraries should start Ask a Librarian Library Service. Due to the service, all the students, teachers and research student can access the library. It was given on the website of that Institution.¹¹

5) Virtual Webinar / Seminars:

Before pandemic all library webinars/ seminars about awareness programs were conducted offline so users were not much aware about online resources but during pandemic many libraries organized virtual programs to create awareness among users how to use online resources/e-resources.¹¹

Libraries have taken effort in arranging webinars relating to topics starting from

information literacy to research ethics to educate their users.¹⁰

6) Creating awareness about NDLI (National Digital Library of India:

The NDLI (National Digital Library of India) is a digital repository of a vast amount of academic content in different formats and provides interface support for leading Indian languages for all academic levels. Science, Engineering and Social Science students can take benefits of NDLI by visiting <https://www.ndl.gov.in> at free of cost. Students can take benefits of video lectures, Web courses, Notes, Questions and Solutions.¹²

7) Awareness about Shodhganga:

The Shodhganga (<https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>) is a digital repository platform of 2,60,000 plus Indian Electronic Thesis and Dissertations for research students to deposit their Ph. D theses and make it available to the entire scholarly community in open acces.¹²

8) E-Shodh Sindhu:

The e-Shodh Sindhu (<https://ess.inflibnet.ac.in>) provides current as well as archival access to more than 10,000 Core and peer reviewed journals and number of bibliographic, citation and factual databases is different disciplines from a large number of publishers and aggregators to it's member institutions, including centrally funded technical

institutions, Universities and Colleges that are covered under 12(B) and 2(f) sections of the UGC Act.¹²

9) e-PG Pathshala:

e-PG Pathshala is a gateway to all post graduate courses. It is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development MHRD under it's National mission on education. e-PG Pathshala host high quality e-text, e-content and video, post graduate disciplines of social science, arts, fine arts, humanities and mathematical science.¹⁰

10) Some of IT Based Library Services:

Libraries can also give some IT based services like¹⁰

- A. RFID.
- B. Information KIOSK.
- C. Library Blog.
- D. OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue)

Innovation through Open Source Software for Library Services:¹³

- **Koha:-** Koha is a popular open-source library management system that is used by libraries of all sizes around the world. It offers modules for Cataloguing, Circulation Acquisition, Serials management & Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC).
- **Open KM:-** It is an open-source document management system that can be

used as a library management system. It offers features for document indexing and search, version control, access control & OPAC.

- **Greenstone:-** It is an open-source digital library software that enables users to create and distribute digital library collection. It offers feature for collection building metadata creation and searching and browsing of collections.
- **Omeka:-** It is a free, open-source, web-publishing platform for sharing digital collections and creating online exhibitions. It offers features for creating metadata, uploading contents and building exhibits.
- **Evergreen:-** It is an open-source integrated library system that offers modules for cataloguing, circulation, acquisition and serials management as well as an OPAC.

12) Innovations in Library Services:

Innovative Library Services are the range of services provided by libraries to support and enhance the use of library resources and meet the information needs of their users. Some common library service include:¹⁴

- **Circulation:-** Circulation services allow users to borrow and return library material. Innovation, in this method is automation adopted. These services include checking out items, renewing materials and manage fines.

- **Interlibrary Loan:-** Interlibrary loan services allow users to request material from other libraries that are not available in their own library's collection. This thing is done by the Apps or Webpages provided by library.
- **Information Literacy Instruction:-** Information literacy instruction services teach users how to effectively find, evaluate and use information resources digitally. This may include workshops, webinars, classes and online tutorials.
- **Technology Services:-** Technology services provide users with access to computers, printers, scanners and other technology tools. This may also include assistance with technology related issues such as software installation and troubleshooting.
- **Outreach and Community engagement:-** This services promote the library and its services to the broader community. This may include partnerships with interconnectivity of schools, community organizations and local businesses.

Overall this Innovative library services are designed to support the mission of the library and provide users with access to information they need to succeed in their academic, professional and personal lives.

13) E-material and Digital Collections:

Libraries are expanding their digital collections offering e-books, e-journal, audio books and digital magazines for borrowing and reading on various devices. Through online platforms and apps, users can access a vast array of digital materials anytime, anywhere.¹⁵

14) Digital Media Labs:

Libraries are establishing digital media labs equipped with audio and video recording, equipments and editing software and other multimedia tools. These labs provide users with resources and space to create digital content such as podcasts, videos and music.¹⁵

15) Mobile Libraries:

Mobile libraries go beyond the traditional brick and mortar setting, reaching out to undeserved communities by bringing books, resources and technology directly to schools, community centers and neighborhoods. These libraries on wheels provide access to information and services to those who may have limited transportation or proximity to a physical library.¹⁵

16) Digital Literacy Programs:

Recognizing the importance of digital skills, libraries are offering digital literacy programs that encompass basic computer skills, internet usage, online safety, coding and other digital competencies. These programs empower individuals to navigate the digital landscape confidently.¹⁵

17) Community Partnership:

Libraries are actively partnering with local organizations, educational institutions. and businesses to expand their service offering. Collaborations may include hosting workshops, providing access to specialized resources, co-organizing events and creating joint programs that benefit the community.¹⁵

18) Collaborative Spaces:

Libraries are creating flexible and technology rich spaces that facilitate collaboration, group work and interactive learning. These spaces may include collaborative work stations, interactive displays and tools for virtual collaboration encouraging creativity and knowledge sharing among users.¹⁵

19) Podcasts:

Podcasts are audio or video programs posted online in standard formats such as MP3 and MP4 and distribution by subscription via RSS syndication.¹⁶

20) RSS Feed Readers:

Also known as news readers, these applications provide a convenient way for users to subscribe to their favorite websites and to monitor each new item posted without ever having to visit the site itself. Virtually every website, blog, online newspaper or social networking site now incorporates either RSS or ATOM coding.¹⁶

21) Twitter:

Although podcasts and RSS readers provide fast, efficient tools for monitoring technology news, Librarian should also consider adopting Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com>) the popular web 2.0 messaging service in the library. Twitter is an online social networking service that allows users to create a personal account as an outreach tool to share experimenting with library. Twitter accounts as an outreach tool to share news, events and links with their users. However Twitter can also be viewed as extremely powerful, customizable news feed.¹⁶

22) Web Publishing:

Word Press started out as a quick, free open source software. With it's visual rich editor, anyone can publish text and photos to the website other options include multiple authors (with separate log-ins), built in RSS (Real simple syndications) technology to keep subscribers updated and a common system that allow readers to interact with the site, contact. It is a fantastic way to communicate with user, Staff & etc.¹⁷

23) Drupal:

Drupal is another web publishing option that some libraries may want to consider using, Many have used the software to build rich community based websites where many different users can control a large amount of content. Example-Web Portals, Corporate Websites and Intranet (internal) web applications.¹⁷

24) Media Wiki:

It is the original software that powered the famous Wikipedia, which basically allows users to create and edit information from a very simple to use tact interface. Another open-source wiki platform is Twiki, a flexible and powerful enterprise can be used as alternatives to the web publishing method used above, but can better be used as the library's place to keep maintenance and training information available that a constantly be updated as library operation change and develop.¹⁷

Use of Internet and Web Technology in Library Services:

Following is a list of Library services where Internet and Web technologies can be used effectively.¹⁸

- **Acquisition:-** Purchasing books from online book stores e.g. www.amazon.com, www.barnesannoble.com, www.flipkart.com, www.crossword.in etc.
- **Classification:-** Classifying document using DDC Online and Library of Congress online classification system.
- **Collection Development:** - Subscription of periodicals in print as well as in e-form by joins library consortia projects.
- **Cataloguing:-** Cataloguing of library resources using available web OPACs, browsing the online catalog for e.g. Library of Congress Catalogue.

- **Circulation:-** remote log in, checking the availability of books, OPAC, access, sending reminder to users, receiving users requests, direct borrowing, inter library loan.
- **Resource Sharing:-** Union Catalog, Accessing database over networks.
- **Subject Gateways:-** SOSIG (for social sciences), ADAM (for Arts Design), EEVL (for Engineering), OMNI (for Medical) etc.

Impact of Innovation in Library Services:

The effect of advanced innovative library services has been huge and extensive.¹⁹

Expanded admittance to data: - Computerized libraries have made it feasible for individuals to get the data from anyplace on the earth. They have taken out the boundaries of general setting, making data accessible every minute of every day.

Further developed protection of data:- Computerized libraries have made it conceivable to safeguard delicate or uncommon materials in an advanced configuration, guaranteeing that they are open to people in the future.

Improved accessibility:- Advanced libraries make it simpler to look for and track down unambiguous snippets of data. They permit clients to look by watchword, creator, title and different models, making it quicker and more productive to find what they are searching for.

Cost investment funds:- Advanced libraries have decreased the expense of gaining, putting away and keeping up with actual materials like books

and diaries. This has made it feasible for libraries to extend their assortment and give more assets to their beneficiaries.

Further developed co-operation and Sharing:-

Advanced libraries have made it simpler for libraries to team up with one another and share assets. This has prompted more noteworthy admittance to data for everybody, paying little minds to areas or assets.

Expanded commitment with Clients:-

computerized libraries have empowered libraries to draw in with their clients in new ways. They give amazing open doors to clients to connect with materials and add to the library's assortment through highlights like client surveys and appraisals.

In general, the effect of innovative library services have been extraordinary, giving more noteworthy admittance to data, further developing conservation and accessibility and cultivating joint effort and commitment with clients.

Recommendations to libraries for improving innovative library services:

Dr. Latpate Rajendra²⁰ have gave some recommendations and guidelines for libraries seeking to implement or improve such services.

1) User-centric Approach:- Place users at the center of service design and delivery, Conduct regular needs assessments, engage with the community and seek feedback to understand user expectations and tailor services accordingly.

2) Embrace Technology:- Stay updated with emerging technologies and leverage them to enhance library services. This may include

offering digital resources, implementing interactive tools and utilizing data analytics to personalize recommendations and improve user experiences.

3) Foster Collaboration:- Establish partnerships and collaborations with community organizations, educational institutions and other stakeholders to expand service offerings and reach a wider audience. Collaborations can lead to shared resources, joint programs and increased community engagement.

4) Promote Digital Literacy:- Develop and offer digital literary programs and resources to empower users with the necessary skills to navigate the digital landscape effectively. This can include workshops, one-on-one training and online tutorials to enhance digital competencies.

5) Staff Development:- Invest in staff training and professional development to ensure library staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to support and implement innovative services. Encourage a culture of innovation and provide opportunities for staff to explore and experiment with new ideas.

6) Continuous Assessment and Evaluation:- Regularly assess the impact and effectiveness of Innovative services through uses feedback, surveys and data analysis. This will enable libraries to make informed decisions, identify areas for improvement and refine services based on user needs.

7) Share Best Practices:- Foster knowledge sharing within the library community by sharing success stories, case studies and best practices.

Participate in conferences, workshops and online forums to learn from others and contribute to the collective knowledge.

8) Seek Funding and Resources:- Explore funding opportunities from grants, foundations and partnerships to support the implementation and sustainability of innovative services. Advocate for the allocation of resources within the library budget for technology training and program development.

These recommendations and guidelines. can serve as a starting point for libraries looking to implement or enhance their innovative services. It is important to adopt and tailor these recommendations based on the specific context, resources and users need of each library.

Conclusion:

Overall, all innovative library services are designed to support the mission of the library and provide user with access to information they need to succeed in their academic, professional and personal lives. These innovative services save the time of users & space of library, so fulfill the fourth law of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan "save the time of user."

It is high time for the Authority, Management, Principal and Librarians to properly look at how they encourage innovations in libraries for ensuring effective channelization of information recourses. Librarian and Library staff must keep track of relevant technology innovations so that they can implement these innovative technology in their libraries for

prompting up-to-date and value based information services to their users.

By implementing these innovative library services, libraries can get numerous benefits such as increased access to information, enhanced user engagement and improved digital literacy. Users can be served in a better way.

It is essential for library professionals to continually assess users needs, seek community input and collaborate with stakeholders to develop and sustain effective and relevant innovative library services. In Covid-19 Pandemic, these innovative library services plays an important role for users.

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