

Crafting Student Centric libraries in B-Schools: A Case Study of Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida (India)

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***Abstract.** Academic institutions who are engaged in professional education, especially B-Schools (Business Schools) have been facing a great challenge in terms of placement and attracting good students. In India, in the last couple of years it was noted that hundreds of B-schools enforced to close their shutter down because of very low admissions. Even good B-schools have been struggling to fill the full allotted quota of seats. This situation has worked as a wake-up call to many B-Schools and they started preparing themselves to cope with the alarming situation in one or other way. In this changing environment, the Jaipuria Institute of Management, who is pioneering management institute in India, formed various teams to evaluate academics (teaching and learning), support sections and student life in all its four campuses. The one of the suggestions of evaluation team is that libraries need to be more pro-active to connect students with library services and resources. Since library provides up to date information to its users, it is being expected that students may learn various things which they may not able to learn in the classrooms because of tight teaching schedules and enhance their employability in the present business needs. Library on Noida campus of the institute taken up the challenge and worked systematically and meticulously for achieving desired goals. Now the library has been getting a good number of users every day and usage of all resources has also gone up extensively.*

Keywords: Student Centric Libraries, B-Schools

1. Introduction

All Across the world, B-Schools (Business and Management Institutions) have shown a tremendous growth which started almost a couple of centuries back with the establishment of a first management institute in 1819 under the name of 'Ecole Superieure de Commerce' in Paris, France. The initial success of this institute and importance of a separate management education had given momentum for establishing renowned institutions such as the School of Commerce (Belgium), Wharton School (Pennsylvania) and Harvard business School (Harvard) and many others across the world. The history of management education in India can be traced back when a Commerce School of Pichhiappa in Chennai was established by the British government. The Sydenham College was the first graduate level B-School established in Mumbai during 1913. Shri Ram College of Commerce founded in 1920 in Delhi. Just after Independence, in the very beginning, the government also encouraged establishment of private funded institutes that paved the way to Xavier's Labour Relations Institute (XLRI) as one of the first privately funded institutes founded in 1949 at Jamshedpur.

The mushrooming of B-Schools was started in the second half of twentieth century with establishment of Indian Institute of Management at Calcutta (1961), Ahmedabad (1962) and, Bangalore (1971) etc. In the year 1981 the number of B-Schools was gone to 118, although keeping proper planning and coordinated development in technical (Management and Engineering) education in view, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) was set up in 1945. But with the growth of institutions and to maintain standard of education, AICTE was accorded with statutory status by an act of Parliament, Government of India in 1987. For beginners, the AICTE has been responsible for planning, formulation and maintenance of norms and standards, monitoring and evaluation of education and

funding of technical and management education in the country. By the year 1991 the total number of B-Schools had gone up to 322. The next decade was not seen much growth only 100 B-Schools were established in the whole decade, one of the main reasons was the world had gone through a dire economic slump which economically affected all businesses including management education. Immediately after the recession was over, a steep rise was seen in the emergence of many new B-Schools and by the end of 2010-11, with an exceptional rate of growth the number of B-Schools goes up to 3844. Although from 2007 onwards the whole world has been witnessing and coping with another economic recession. Hence, for the last few years management education all across the world is facing a terrible situation. In India, in 2010 and 2011 more than 225 management institutions had closed their shutters and many more are on the threshold of dying. One amongst the biggest reasons was found that many institutions were unable to produce good managers who could really ensure employability during multidimensional changes in all businesses and industries. They just focused on providing academic certificates to students instead of sharpening them by enhancing their management skills as per present economic dimensions. Many of the B-Schools taken this as a wake up call and geared up to produce quality products (managers) instead of quantity. Jaipuria Institute of Management is one amongst top B-Schools in North India embarked upon the overall development of students and not just to compete at national level but at International level too. Apart from quality teaching a major focus is being given on practical exposures, communication skills, extracurricular activities, interact with prominent leaders, sharpening managerial skills and inculcating social values and ethics as well.

2. Jaipuria Institute of Management

The Jaipuria Group has been a long heritage of providing educational excellence to the society of India which started with the establishment of Seth Anandram Jaipuria College in Calcutta in 1945. The Mainly Jaipuria Group has been known as a Tycoon in Textile industries but soon they also realized to build an educated and cultured society and started it from primary level by establishing a primary school in Lucknow in 1992 under the aegis of its charitable trust called '*Integral Education Society*'. They also realized that good managers can take Indian industry's way forward and also contribute a lot for the betterment of Indian economy in particular. In the year 1995, Integral Education Society established its first B-School campus under Jaipuria Institute of Management in Lucknow, the second campus was established in 2004 at Noida, third in Jaipur in 2006 and Indore campus come into existence in 2010. All campuses were beautifully constructed and magnificently developed. With an ever growing chain of B-Schools, Jaipuria Group have been established by providing a standard quality education that also aims to provide a successful and ambitious management career to our young generation. The Noida campus of the Institute has been facing challenges from all sides by being in the NCR region, producing a great challenge from other renowned institutions. The National Capital Region (NCR) is one of the largest metropolitan areas of the world. It is known as a hub of academic institutions. The region has seen most remarkable growth in management education by accommodating about 200 B-Schools. The growth of B-Schools brings a great competition among all institutes and also the ongoing economic recession place a great challenge to all B-schools for their survival. Presently, students have many options for obtaining management education. The Jaipuria Institute of Management reviewed the present situation and geared up for revamping each and every ingredient of teaching, learning process. The institute conducted a well framed survey of all its students (at all campuses) and stakeholders to find out the weak areas which may be strengthened soon. After analyzing the survey, lack of student Centricity was observed across the campuses. Apart from taking immediate measures to improve teaching pedagogies, course structure and outlines, infrastructure, canteen, mess and other facilities, libraries were also given much attention. A serious concern was shown for developing student centric libraries throughout the campuses.

3. Library of Jaipuria Institute of Management at Noida

Historically, the library was established in 2004 as a hub for the library and information services in the Institute. It serves as a creative and innovative player in supporting the teaching, learning, scholarship and research activities of the Institute. The library building spread over two floors and is an exceptional example of modular construction. The library is entirely devoted to the academic needs of the students and faculty. It offers a wide range of management, business and economic subject areas through its fast growing core collection of over 12500. It is a hybrid library

accommodating a vast range of print and electronic resources of information. It has extended on and off campus library services to its users. Time to time, to enhance its services library conducts user surveys and interviews. Though, in the survey conducted by the authority, the library of Jaipuria Institute of Management on Noida campus was well appreciated with respect to its services. The library chalked out a plan by keeping student Centricity as an aim, to convert good library to an active library. The following areas were taken up as a challenge to establish a student centric approach in the library.

1. Students on library committee
2. Collection development
3. Footfalls in the library
4. Library ambience
5. Extra co-curricular activities
6. Other value added services

3.1 Students in Library Committee

The institute has an active library committee consists of the Librarian and faculty members but there was no representative of students who could share their views on a regular basis. Importance of students was realized at the very first meeting (beginning of 2012) and students were also brought into the library scheme of planning, so that students' perspective could be taken up before implementation and execution of any new library activity or service. One representative from each course has been nominated by the Programme Directors as a member of the library committee. After few brainstorming meetings a logo was also formed to give a unique identity to the library and marketing campaign by students to highlight library services and activities brought users closer to the library services.

To develop a pro-active library system on the campus, the librarian was also nominated for attending Faculty Council meetings as an observer or a member. By this the librarian comes to know about various ongoing or upcoming academic issues or subject areas, which helps in proper planning to develop collections in needed areas. It is helping students to abreast with new development in their respective fields.

3.2 Collection Development

Collection is the main strength of any library and users feel attached to the library when they frequently get the books which they wanted to read. In an internal library survey conducted during 2010 about 54 percent of the students were not satisfied with the library collection. They asked for more varieties of contents in reading. Keeping a serious concern, the library team comes up with an interesting mechanism of procuring books as per the need of students. They asked for recommending titles of books which they want to read and they were also requested to comment on why they require recommended book or books in the library.

Apart from these general recommendations from students, every month at three day book display on an asked subject area has been started. This monthly book display received overwhelmingly by the students. An Annual Book Fair during the annual function of students in the campus is also being organized every year. The books recommended by students in the exhibitions or displays are being sent to the concerned subject area faculty for the confirming worth of the book in the library collection and to avoid procurement of any book containing ill or cheap information.

The library team had made a list of 50 management experts of the world, then compiled a list of their classic publications and finally made them available in the library.

In the year 2012, from total procured books for the library, 37 percent was suggested by students. This year in another internal survey about 15 percent students were not satisfied with the library collection. It is being expected that this percentage of unsatisfied students would reach to 2 and 3 percent by mid of 2013.

3.3 Footfalls in the library

Today, libraries (big or small) across the world have been coping with low footfalls of readers. The library of Jaipuria

Institute of Management had come up with various initiatives for improving footfalls in the library. Some of the initiatives taken up for improving footfalls in the libraries are listed below:

- Students are being treated as guests in the library.
- More reading space was allotted (in this process whole ground floor was concerted as reading hall).
- Students were allowed to have academic discussions in the library.
- Library staff is responsive on each and every query of the student.
- Frequent and decent students are being awarded with ‘*Special Library User*’ awards.
- Initiated informative activities and games to offer other ways of learning.

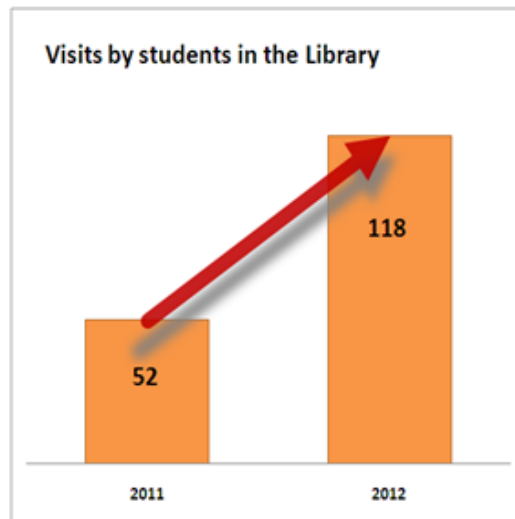


Figure 1.

After initiating above listed services and activities, a sea change has been observed on footfalls in the library. A more depicted in the Figure 1, in which per day library visits have gone tremendously up than the last year. In the year 2011 the average number of students’ visits per day was 52 which reached to 118 visits per day in the year 2012.

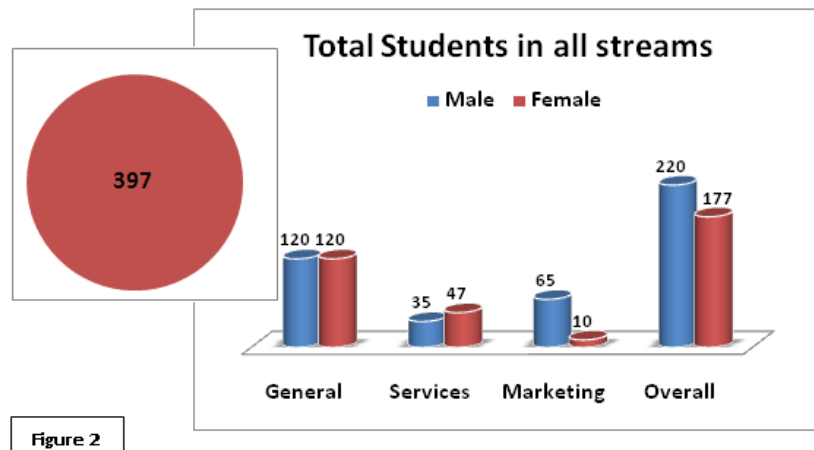


Figure 2

To work in the more systematic manner library has installed an electronic gadget (for attendance) in the library so that students’ In/Out times can be recorded. After evaluating IN and OUT statistics of student visits in the library, analysis brought few more challenges to library staff. The overall analysis of visits report is given below:

The campus has 397 students learning in different academic streams. Overall, there are 240 students in Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) General, 82 in PGDM – Services specialization and 75 in PGDM – Marketing specialization stream. The Figure 2 shows gender-wise distribution of students in the campus.

3.3.1 Students who never stepped in the Library

From the statistics, it was found that 21.6 percent of our students never stepped inside the library during last two months. Female students are more reluctant to visit the library, out of a total strength of female students 26 percent has never stepped in. The percentage of male library visitors, who never stepped in, is 16.8 which is quite low from the average percentage (21.6%). The library staff has been interacting with these students and trying to find out the reasons for their not visiting the library.

3.3.2 Non library visitors

Library team statistically thought of checking the non library visitors so that proper measures can be taken up on time. For finding non library visitors, the group who never stepped in the library and the users who visited the library twice or thrice during the last two months was also clubbed. It was reflected that 37.5 percent of our students rarely visit the library. After analyzing the data, few observations were also noted that around 60 percent students are non library visitors; only 40 percent students are frequently visiting the library. It was also noted that 72 percent students of PGDM- Service, 70 percent of PGDM – Marketing and 51 percent of PGDM – General are non library users. Gender-wise distribution of non-library visitors were also evaluated and found that 74 percent of the non-library visitors are females.

3.3.3 Frequent Library Visitors

From the total library users, 22 percent of the students are frequent visitors, who have been visiting library almost every day and others are moderate ones. This is again imposing a great challenge to library staff and administration to make ‘*moderate library visitors*’ as ‘*frequent library users*’ and ‘*non-library visitors*’ to ‘*moderate library visitors*’.

3.4 Library ambience

The library team worked on some parameters and installed various flower pots in the library. The original flower plants implanted to provide a natural look to the library. The walls of the library are covered with few thoughtful and well framed art designs bought from the National Art Gallery of India. The reading space was also enhanced with comfortable chairs and tables. Now, around 130 students can read in the library at one time. The whole ground floor has been given to group academic discussions, pre read and general reading and an area, accommodating 30 seats, is allocated at first floor of the library for serious reading and research purpose.

3.5 Extra co-curricular activities

The library started arranging various extracurricular activities, especially keeping library resources as a base for the students. The following events have been arranged on a regular basis.

3.5.1 Collage making competition

The Library has organized a competition on Collage making. The main objectives of arranging this competition were student Centricity. It provided students a creative way to express their artistic feelings. It was also to enhance the thought process of students as well as in strengthening teamwork within a group. The event is being highly appreciated by all students. The collages of First and Second Prize winners have been framed and placed in the campus.

3.5.2 Mind Games

To assess memory and concentration level of the students, the library organizes an interesting and fun oriented game namely ‘*Mind Games*’. The library uses books as a basic prop for this game. Mind games provided an opportunity for students to explore new horizons of management through brain storming on spot quizzes.

3.5.3 Treasure Hunt

To assess participants' familiarity towards the library resources (documents) and departments an event called 'treasure hunt' is arranged. It is being arranged in the library with props such as books, journals, magazines and newspapers etc. The main objective of the game is to test library skills of the participants for locating specific documents in a fun and entertaining manner.

3.6 Other value added services

The library has recently launched various value added services to keep students up to date with the latest happenings around the world in their respective areas and also about new additions in the library collection.

New arrival list: Circulating new arrivals list of faculty as well as students (Monthly basis). Library informs the concerned student immediately on the arrival of his/her and all other recommended documents in the library.

Book reviews: Circulating book reviews, compiled from various newspapers and magazines, for library users.

Book displays: Displaying books for 5-7 days on various topics which have been lying unused on the library stacks.

Company profiles: Preparing company profiles whenever requested by student or faculty members and circulating the same to all students.

Information Searching: Helping students and faculty in their academic and research pursuits by searching online information from available resources.

News updates: On regular basis library circulates latest happenings in the areas of management and business to all students every day.

Documentation Service: On regular basis library team compiles bibliographies of various resources available in our library and circulating the same to all our users.

Training and Awareness Programmes: Library subscribes to few electronic resources. At the beginning of every session an orientation program is being conducted for new students. On demand library orientation is also being given to users. The product-wise tutorials for all subscribed e-resources were created and time to time being circulated among students. The trainers of e-resources have also been called to provide useful tips and hands on practice to students as well as faculty members.

Digital Library and Institutional Repository: Library maintaining a Digital Library which comprises collections of case studies, research articles and company profiles by using Greenstone Digital Library Software. It is also maintaining its website and blog.

Special Library User Awards: To encourage students who are using library on frequent basis a 'Special Library User Award' is constituted. Any student, who is achieving set criteria with respect to following parameters, will be awarded as 'Special Library User'. The evaluation is being done on every three months and students fulfilling minimum criterion points may be consider for final awards and two students with top points are being awarded with

- Code of conduct in the library
- Number of visits in the library
- Number of duration spent in the library
- Usage of library resources

- Academic consideration (academic performance)

The ‘*Special Library User*’ is being offered following privileges:

- Status of faculty member in the library
- The awardees may borrow as many as books being given to a faculty member.
- No overdue fine will be charged.
- Awardees may get one gift hamper and a certificate.

4. Conclusion

Library staff needs to establish a trust among its users for creating a student centric library. The Post Graduate students are not kids, the library staff is treating them as growing professional and support their on campus as well as off campus learning. Since perception about all libraries are changing and it is the responsibility of library staff to sense the signal change and modify the services accordingly. Technology is playing an important role hence all efforts are also being made to give state-of-the-art library to users. The library team has been extending information support in a more personal manner which is well acknowledged by the users. The Jaipuria library at Noida campus is determined to provide one of the best libraries of the region especially to motivate students by developing reading habits for lifelong learning. From new session, the library is planning to extend its services to campus alumni as well. Now library team is working on counting ‘*Return On Investment*’ (ROI) so that weak areas and shortcomings may be found and proper measures can be taken well on time.

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