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## A STUDY OF LIBRARY BEST PRACTICES IN THE NEWLY PROVINCIALISED DEGREE COLLEGES OF BARAK VALLEY, ASSAM

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The role of college library is to disseminate information and substantial instruction in the teaching learning process for all round development of the College Community. College library acts as a guide where users receive sufficient instruction through library collection and reference services. To fulfil its duties and responsibilities library has to update with latest technology and adapt best practices to meet users demand and satisfaction. Moreover NAAC has suggested few best practices for the college libraries to follow. This study is based on NAAC best practices parameters to find out status and evaluated the libraries.

**Methodology:** Descriptive research method based on scheduled questionnaire has been applied for this survey along with personal observation to conduct this study. The colleges which are newly provincialised by the govt of Assam therefore these colleges libraries are at growing stage and application of best practices as per NAAC recommendation has to be implemented. There are 11 degree colleges provincialised in 2012-2013 in three districts of Barak valley which are affiliated to Assam University, Silchar.

**Findings:** As the study population have newly provincialised therefore the colleges fulfilling minimum benchmark of NAAC best practices parameters which can be extended to achieve higher academic performances and quality of library services. The study suggests some special attention of college authorities on the development libraries to meet the user need and satisfaction of the user.

**Originality:** This is an original research works conducted based on the data collected from the college librarian through scheduled questionnaire distributed to 11 degree colleges of Barak valley.

**Keywords:** Academic Library, Colleges Library, Library Best Practices, NAAC, Barak valley, Assam

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The role of College library is to dissemination of information and knowledge resource to support teaching learning process for all round development of the College Community. College library acts as a pioneer where users receive sufficient instruction through library collection and reference services. To fulfill its duties and responsibilities library has to update with latest technology and adapt best practices to meet users demand and satisfaction. To adapt drastically

changes in information technology and information communication technology pushed library professional to depend on Internet and social media for resource sharing a new way of information exchange. The new trend in information sources, services and dissemination of information has reached its new milestone every day. Hence e-resources, online reference, social media on libraries, library consortium, cloud base services and management, digital libraries, e-content etc based on technology evolved in librarianship.

National Assessment and Accreditation (NAAC) clearly recommended library best practices as a method or benchmark which practiced in modern libraries for providing quality services. It is creative problem solving process, practice of next generation libraries. The present study is to understand best practices in the libraries from the scholarly resources and check how college libraries are implementing these parameters to meet quality services for overall academic achievement especially as suggested and recommend by NAAC. This study covers 11 numbers of degree colleges which are newly provincialised by the Provincialisation of services Act 2011 Govt. of Assam in the Barak Valley.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has been conducted to understand library best practices from the scholarly publications especially NAAC recommendation on library best practices for college libraries to evaluate and assess the status of college libraries for implementing these parameters to meet quality services for all round academic achievement. The main objectives of this study are:

- i) To understand and aware NAAC recommendation on best practice for the college libraries in the newly provincialised degree colleges of Barak Valley, Assam
- ii) To check the status of ICT infrastructure in newly provincialised degree colleges of Barak Valley, Assam.
- iii) To find out the status library best practices in the newly provincialised degree colleges of Barak Valley, affiliated to Assam University, Silchar.
- iv) To evaluate and rank newly provincialised degree colleges of Barak Valley according to library best practice parameters.

## 3. SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study prepared and proposed a list of best practice parameter from the scholarly publications available especially NAAC recommendation for "Best Practices in Academic Libraries" to implement and evaluate college libraries to strive for quality and excellent library services for all round academic development. This study is limited to newly provincialised degree college libraries of three districts (Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi) of Assam under jurisdiction of Assam University, Silchar. There are 11 newly Govt. provincialised degree colleges of Barak Valley which are affiliated to Assam University, Silchar.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology applied in this study has been briefly described under the following subheadings.

- i) **METHODS USED:** Descriptive research based on survey with the help of structured questionnaire along with personal observations and experiences has been applied to conduct this study.
- ii) **SAMPLE SIZE:** The colleges which are newly provincialised by the govt. of Assam therefore these colleges libraries are at growing stage and application of best practices as per NAAC recommendation has to be implemented. This study has been conducted to find out the status of library best practices in 11 degree colleges provincialised in 2012-2013 in three districts of Barak valley which are affiliated to Assam University, Silchar.
- iii) **SAMPLE SELECTION:** Whole population sampling method has been used to collect data for this study. This study covers 11 colleges which are provincialised in 2013 at Barak Valley.
- iv) **DESIGN OF QUESTIONNAIRE:** A structured questionnaire were designed and distributed to the college librarian to collect the required data from the entire study population.
- v) **STATISTICAL MEASURES:** After collecting the data through questionnaire from the study population of college libraries have been tabulated and analyzed to find out the study out come and graphical representation of data according to the study objectives.
- vi) **DATA SOURCES:** The data sources are the library data as per questionnaire provided by the college librarian or librarians/c during the survey from entire study universe is the total data source used in this study to understand the status of best practices in the newly provincialised colleges of Barak valley.

#### 5. LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of literature has been made to understand the scholarly opinions, suggestions, recommendations related library best practices and extend library best practices parameters to evaluate, assess library services and performances in the college libraries.

**1. NAAC (2005)** has been conducted a study on identifying Best Practices in Library and Information Services to assess and accredited academic libraries, and recommended the following best practices parameters that can enhance the academic information environment and usability of academic libraries to achieve higher academic goal and performances. a) Computerization of library with standard digital software. b) Inclusion of sufficient information about the library in the college prospectus. c) Compiling student/teacher attendance statistics and locating them on the notice board. d) Displaying newspaper clippings on the notice board periodically. e) Career/Employment Information/ Services. f) Internet Facilities to different user groups. g) Information literacy programs. h) Suggestion box and timely response. i) Displaying new arrivals and circulating a list of those to academic departments. j) Conducting book exhibitions on different occasions. k) Organizing book talks. l) Instituting Annual Best User award for students. m) Organizing competitions annually. n) Conducting user surveys periodically.

**2. Vyas , S. D. (2009)** has suggested and recommended a set of library best practice parameters by accessing different best practices given by experts and researchers based on NAAC and latest trend in LIS. He recommended the following different aspects of best practices are categorized under four main functions of library.

**i) Library Management and Administration:** for administering a better library management, it better to implement and assure - Formation of library Committee, organization and management of stack, well trained professional library staff, organize user awareness about library, collect feedback using suggestion box, user motivation program such as book talks, author talks, review book, seminar etc., maintain library statistics for implementation of library policies norms and determine library development.

**ii) Collection development strategy and maintenance:** Library services and performance solely depends on its collection. A good library meanthow good its collection. It looks like easy but it is a hard job to select and procure healthy library collection as per user expectations to satisfy them. There should be certain policies to be implemented. Library should follow collection development techniques like analyzing library statistics, take user survey and feedback etc. Library should follow collection development places like analyzing library statistics take user survey and feedback etc. There is a need of set of parameters for maintenance retention and waiting out. Help in the survey to find out user need and requirements.

**iii) User Services :** Proper retrieval and dissemination of information and access of resources can extend library performance and satisfaction of end users. Apart from reading and issue/return a library should extend services like CAS SDI services to the users, newspaper clipping service on topic of importance, use a guidance education program information literacy program etc., informational are service to user, select best users and find their requirements.

**iv) Use of Technology:** ICT forced modern library and information centers to re-engineer the entire library system. It made easy and possible to enhance every activity like management, organization, collection development, dissemination of library resources. Use of ICT makes easy dissemination and access of resources. To adapt new change libraries need to use of ICT tools to maximize and better use of resources, implement library automation and library management software, development of library database accessible in different format marc RDA etc., development of digital library for better access of information without wall, use of internet for remote access of resources and communication among user community, development of library website and update regularly, to preserve intellectual assets develop institutional repository IR, collect disseminate e resources, focus on 24 /7 library services online.

**3. Dahibhate, et. al. (2011)** explained the best practices suits to the vision and mission of organization and libraries and basing on the review of different personalities they emphasized and also recommended the some best practices for modern libraries:

**4. Ahmed, Merina and Pal, Birender (2012)** have been recommended Best Practices in their study with NAAC benchmarks in the College Libraries of Nalbari District, Assam. Due to NAAC assessment most of the colleges started to developing their libraries but quite a large number of colleges have not progressed as expected due to lack of professional staff. The researcher pointed to improve best practices in college libraries for overall development of the user community.

**5. Dev Sharmah, R. M. (2016)** in the doctoral thesis entitled "A Study on Best Practices with Special Emphasis on Modernization in the Libraries of Degree Colleges Affiliated to

Dibrugarh University, Assam” that aims to understand the status of the best practices in the degree college libraries under Dibrugarh University and also to find out the status of modernization in the college libraries.

**6. Dey, N. C., Singh, S. K. and Deka, P. K. (2017)** in their study “Emerging Functions and Activities of Library Consortia with reference to Best Practices in LICs of Higher Education in Assam have suggested best practices for libraries such as library automation, digitization etc. they provided special emphasis on library consortia and broadly categorizes into club consortia and resource sharing consortia.

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The present study covers the degree college libraries of three districts of Barak valley under jurisdiction of Assam University, Silchar. There are 24 Govt. Provincialised colleges but present study is covering 11 colleges affiliated to Assam University, which are newly provincialised by the govt. of Assam under Provincialisation of Services Act 2011. These colleges are growing and in developing stage. This study has been made to aware UGC NAAC assessment and accreditation according to the best practice parameters to meet the requirements UGC and DHE, Govt. of Assam. Total numbers of 10 colleges from the study population contributed and responded the questionnaire distributed for data collection and response rate is 90%. List of Colleges surveyed with status and qualification of Librarian is given below:

Table 1: List of Colleges surveyed with status and qualification of Librarian

Sl. No.		Year of Establishment	Year of Provincialization	Status of Librarian	Qualification of Librarian
1	A. L. C. College	1996	2013	Under provincialisation	MLISc, UGC NET
2	J. N. Singh College	1998	2013	Under provincialisation	MLISc, PHD
3	M. H. C. M. College	1997	2013	Under provincialisation	MLISc, PHD*
4	Nilam Bazar College	1994	2013	Librarian i/c	BLIS
5	Pathar Kandi College	1990	2013	Librarian i/c	BLIS
6	S. K. Roy College	1995	2013	Librarian i/c	-
7	S.C. Dey College	1992	2013	Librarian i/c	MA, MLISc
8	Satya Ranjan College	1993	2013	Librarian i/c	MLIS
9	Silchar College	1994	2013	Librarian i/c	MLIS
10	West Silchar College	1985	2013	Under provincialisation	MLISc, PHD*
11	Vivekananda College	Not respond	-	-	-

It has been observed that the colleges are provincialised in the year 2013, initially started with the help of public. Only four regular Librarians are working with UGC Minimum qualifications or going to be pursued but the six numbers of college library is serving with Asst. Librarian or Library Asst. only. The Govt. of Assam has amended the Act in 2017 and promised to provincialised these colleges. This study suggests to provincialised the qualified position as per Act and remaining position of Librarian to be recruited soon. Without a full pleasant qualified librarian, Library cannot perform higher achieving academic support for all round performance and this can be seen in the preset study.

## 6.1 STATUS OF LIBRARY REGISTRATION, SUBSCRIPTION

In the following Table the details of enrolment of last five years have been collected and it has been observed that sufficient numbers of students enrolled each year in different semesters. The registered numbers of library users have also been gathered to find out the usage of library. It can be clearly observed from the percentage produced from the enrollment of current session with the registered library patrons that most of the library has below 50% of user from the total enrolment. Lack of user awareness and less attendance in an academic year can be a major reason behind it. Lack of motivation of library professional is also noticed.

Table: 3 Total no. of students enrolled along with registered number of library users

Sl. No.	Name of the College	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	Registered library user	Percentage
1	A. L. C. College	526	568	540	659	486	220	45.27%
2	J. N. Singh College	245	315	285	340	319	230	72.10%
3	M. H. C. M. College	61	72	88	145	125	53	42.40%
4	Nilam Bazar College	280	325	450	530	610	355	58.19%
5	Patharkandi College	383	365	495	545	580	459	79.13%
6	S. K. Roy College	353	464	507	583	650	157	24.15%
7	S.C. Dey College	753	483	473	601	690	492	71.30%
8	Satya Ranjan College	190	200	280	315	420	250	59.52%
9	Silchar College	178	220	260	320	364	100	27.47%
10	West Silchar College	500	510	550	605	615	100	16.26%
11	Vivekananda College	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

### 6.1.1 Graphical Representation of Status of registered library Users

To understand more about the status of library users as per the total enrolment in the current session following graphical representation have been provided. In this figure Patharkandi College appears with 79.13% the highest library users followed by J. N. Singh College with 72.1% where as West Silchar College and S. K. Roy College recorded less numbers of library users.

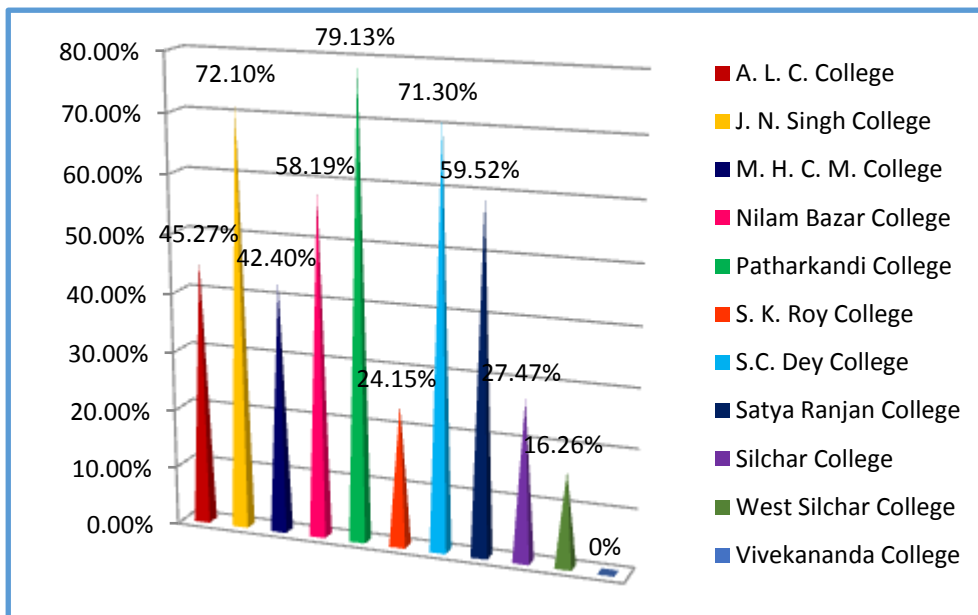


Figure 1: Status of registered library users

### 6.2. STATUS OF ICT INFRASTRUCTURE

ICT infrastructure made foundation of modern library management and services. Starting from in-house management to information dissemination and social media services. Therefore ICT is the need of the hour in library and information centers. The libraries under this study are growing and having less ICT based services like Automation and digitization etc. It is found that every libraries having at least a Computer machine for library and official works. Only 50% libraries having Internet connection and most of the library having Printer and a scanner. The college should be concern about ICT implementation and spent more money on ICT infrastructure.

Table: 2 Status of ICT Infrastructure in the libraries surveyed

SL.NO.	ICT INFRASTRUCTURE	FREQUENCIES	PERCENTAGE
1	Client Machine	10	100%
2	Printer	9	90%
3	Scanner	8	80%
4	CCTV Camera	2	20%
5	Telephone	4	40%
6	Modem	5	50%
7	Photocopy Machine	1	10%
8	UPS	9	90%
9	Inverter/Generator	3	30%
10	other	1	10%

### 6.3 STATUS OF LIBRARY BEST PRACTICES

The best practices suggested by NAAC in its quality indicators in library and information services to its constituent college libraries have been checked with the additional parameters suggested in different research studies. There are 26 parameters have been checked in the present study among the 11 colleges and ranked as 1 and 0 to find out the real life situation of the library providing quality and services. There are 11 colleges provincialised by Govt. of Assam in 2013 which are in initial stage and having experiences of poor best practice indicators due to the unawareness of library best practices and NAAC quality Indicators. The present study also reveals the current status of libraries newly provincialised in Barak Valley as per the data provided, the library best practices which frequently implemented. Most occurring best practices are Collection Development Policies (100%), Library Book Exhibition (80%), Student Participation Program (70%), Campus LAN/Wi-Fi and Newspaper Clipping (60%) available in all libraries where as Book talk and Dynamic websites, e-book, and access to online resources are found unsatisfactory. The authority must take necessary action to fulfill these parameter to face NAAC accreditation as early as possible

Table 2: Status of Best Practices

Sl. No	Library Best Practices	ALC College	JN Sing College	MHCM College	N.B. College	P. College	S.K.R College	S.C.D College	S.R College	Silchar College	W.Silchar College
1	Collection Development	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Staff Promotional Policy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Student Participation Prog.	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
4	Resource Generation	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
5	Library Book Exhibition	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
6	Extended Library Hours	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
7	Best User Awards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Book Talk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
9	User Feedback	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
10	Suggestion Box	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
11	Home Page	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Dynamic Website	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
13	Campus LAN Wi-Fi	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
14	Surveillance System	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
15	Staff User Meet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
16	Virtual Information Brochures	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	E Books	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	NLIST Membership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	Blogs/Wikis /SMS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
20	Carrier Information Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1	1
21	Display New Arrivals	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
22	Information Literacy Prog.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
23	Newspaper Clipping	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
24	Alert Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	Access To Online Database	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	Others	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

#### 6.3.1 Graphical Representation of Status of Best Practices in Percentage.

A graphical representation has been provided for better understanding of Status of library best practices among the newly provincialised degree colleges affiliated to Assam University, Silchar. It



can be observed that all the parameters are not equally followed by the libraries and some parameters are unknown to these libraries. Libraries are suggested to fulfill as much as best practices for better performance in NAAC and quality library services.

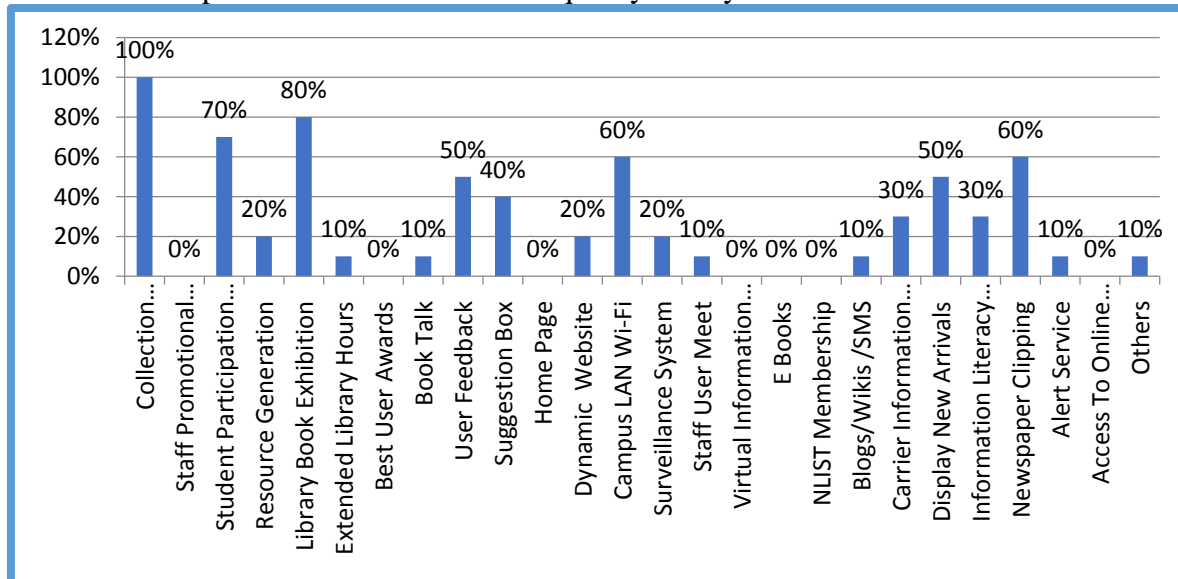


Figure 2: Status of Library Best Practices

#### 6.4 PERFORMANCE OF LIBRARIES ACCORDING TO BEST PRACTICES

This study is made to check the comparative performances of newly Provincialised college libraries at Barak valley, Assam as per the implementation of best practices are concern and rank them to find the best performance among them. Here Silchar College performed better followed by West Silchar College and ALC College. The remaining libraries have to take necessary step in this regard.

Table 3: Performance of College Libraries

Sl. No.	Name of the Colleges	Percentage
1	A. L. C. College	34.60%
2	J. N. Singh College	30.76%
3	M. H. C. M. College	23.07%
4	Nilam Bazar College	23.07%
5	Pathar Kandi College	7.69%
6	S. K. Roy College	19.23%
7	S.C. Dey College	15.38%
8	Satya Ranjan College	26.92%
9	Silchar College	46.15%
10	West Silchar College	38.46%
11	Vivekananda College	0%

### 6.2.1 Graphical Representation of Performance of College Libraries on Best Practices

The graphical representation of Performance of colleges reveals the performances of the libraries as per best practices are concern. Though the college libraries already have been Provincialised but the performances of the libraries not up to the mark and they need to focus on overall library development beside other development. It can be clearly say that if any library can fulfill these quality indicators set by NAAC with the extended indicators proposed in this study can perform and satisfy their user needs.

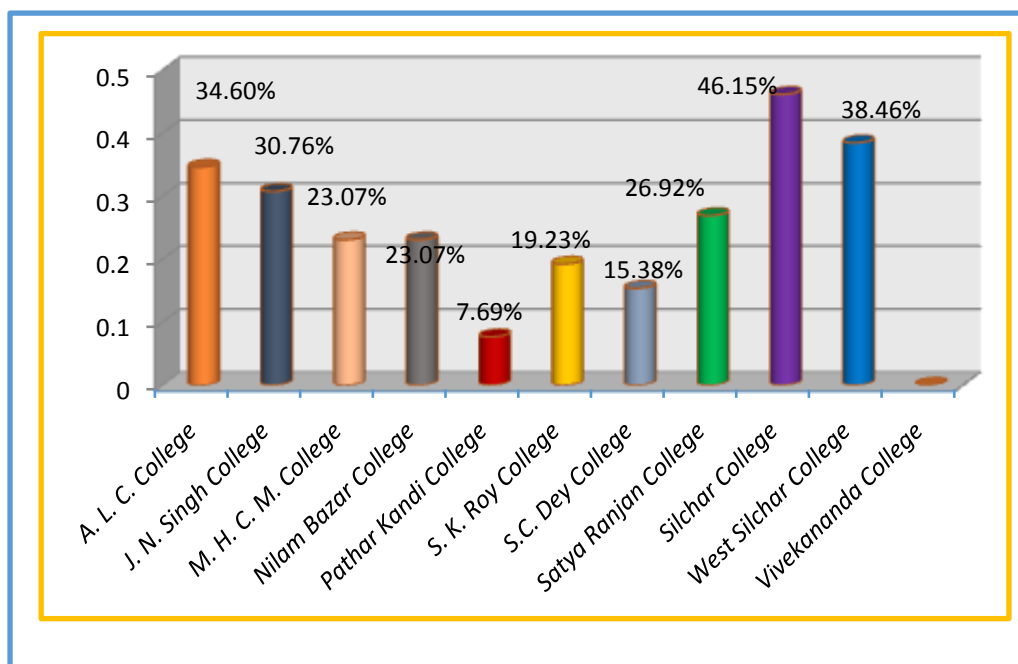


Figure 1: Performance of College Libraries

## 7. FINDINGS SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

### 7.1 FINDINGS:

- i) The newly provincialised colleges of Barak Valley are in initial stage. There are four numbers of colleges having qualified librarians and their services yet to be Provincialised by the Govt. of Assam.
- ii) In the present study it has been observed that the numbers of registered users are quite low due to lack of awareness and lack of attendance in the college.
- iii) These colleges are having insufficient ICT infrastructure due to lack of fund and lack concern of authorities about the development of libraries.
- iv) The awareness level of library best practices are not up to the mark as the libraries are not aware with NAAC best practice quality indicators for overall performance of the colleges.

- v) The status of library best practices in the college libraries are found unsatisfactory due to the lack of motivation of library professionals.
- vi) The performance of the college libraries on best practice parameters is insufficient for an average academic library. Authority must concern about NAAC best practices quality indicators for quality library services and all round academic performance.

## 7.2 SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Best practice ensures successful outcomes in any field with the help of knowledge and technology. In library and information science best practices are used to improve quality services. To create new opportunity and positive impact to the entire institution for solving a problem best practices can be used to innovative and a policy, strategy, process, program or practices NAAC (2006). To achieve objectives of best practices are the best ways to find successful performance and keep up to date in any sector. Best practices are the innovative ideas for solving process method or techniques to get better quality results. Best practices in library and information centers suggested by many practitioners, researchers to manage libraries in the day-to-day library management and services.

The present study suggests the concern authorities to focus more on the development of ICT infrastructure to enhance library services. The authority should take necessary initiatives for grasping user attention on libraries and more usage of the library. Present study also suggest to implement best practice parameters to for performing on NAAC accreditation and overall academic performance of the user community.

The study ends up with concluding remark that the librarian should come out with professional attitude and ethics to meet the all possible requirements just not to keep records to face UGC NAAC and perform good score but also to meet quality, services and academic achievements. In these connection libraries has to follow the best practices quality indicators in order to improve overall quality and services to meet day to day challenges.

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