

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT METHODS AND POLICIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT:

“Library is a trinity of books, staff and readers and book is the foundation of the library. It becomes the sign and symbol of incentive to become dynamic and regarded the rich springs from which the knowledge flows to irrigate the wide fields of education and culture. The usefulness of a library would depend upon the quality of its collection as determined by its relevance to the library purpose. Collection Building is a very imported function of a library which should be given for the most careful attention . The collection building programme is a plan to carry out the objectives of the university library in relation to the development of library collections. The study of the paper is about the need, purpose, issues and the methods of collection development, and their policies in academic libraries.

Keywords: *Collection building, Collection development methods, academic libraries, libraries.*

Introduction:

Information resources in myriad forms have been collected and preserved for future generations and posterity from ancient times. India has a rich tradition of learning and education was considered as the most important tool for self-realization in ancient India. There is “no country where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence” (Thomas, 1891). The importance and respect with which a nation views its universities and higher education systems reflect its appreciation of the role of these institutions in nation-building. Higher education in India is witnessing sea changes as the universities and colleges are striving for achieving high standards at the national and international levels. University libraries are playing a major role in the development of higher education. This is reflected in the way libraries are developing their collections, providing facilities and delivering services. Collection available in the library should meet the needs of the user community for which discussions with specialists are necessary to identify and locate the required information. A holistic collection incorporates the characteristics of both traditional collection and the changes brought by technology. Since collections are developed primarily for serving the information needs of the users, how users perceive a collection while seeking information and how the collection can facilitate information seeking are important factors to be considered while developing collections. For a collection to be useful, the items should be selected based on the community's needs (Lee, 2000). Several studies are being conducted at the national and international levels for assessing the user satisfaction level, evaluation of collections and how to update the existing collections to meet the changing requirements (Fombad & Mutula, 2003).

Collection Development in Libraries

The primary function of libraries and information centres is to assist in accessing information and gathering knowledge. Collection development is the central professional function of any library since the very concept of a library is primarily associated with the idea of a collection. Developing library collection is one of the most demanding and challenging professional functions of a library which requires a deeper knowledge and understanding of the service community, institutional priorities and information & publishing industry. According to Evans & Margaret (2004), collection development is “the process of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of a library’s materials collection in terms of patron needs and community resources, and attempting to correct existing weaknesses if any”. It involves the framing of a systematic plan for creating library collections that will meet the needs of library users and incorporates several activities like determination and co-ordination of relevant policies, fiscal management, assessment of user needs, collection use studies, collection analysis, identification of collection needs, selection of materials, planning for resource sharing, collection maintenance, weeding and user liaison, and outreach activities.

Collection development is a dynamic process that requires the involvement of both library professionals and the service community. The need and value of client input are not given due importance or often neglected which is a drawback since resources in libraries are intended to meet the needs of the community. It should be an inclusive process taking care of not just the most active users but the total community’s needs and incorporating all types of formats. It should also have a plan to rectify weaknesses and maintain strengths.

Brief review of literature:

As defined by Evans, it is the process of making certain that the library meets the information needs of its user population in a timely and economic manner, using information resources produced both from inside and outside the organization. This process involves several components that include, the library’s mission, assessment of patron’s needs, strength and weakness of the existing collection and tools for identifying the relevant and quality material. Collection development in an academic library is a two-way process involving the faculty and the librarian. Thus, informal communication between librarian and faculty is needed to cultivate consciously the relationship to make collection development process efficacious. Ameen, Kanwal (2006) in his article discussed all kinds of managerial and practical issues pertaining to collection development and its acquisitions.. The paper has attempted to explore the relationship between the use of varying collection-related terminologies and ever-emerging forms of scholarly publishing in libraries. Shrivastava (2009) in his article emphasized on need of building of collection development in electronic environment due to large availability of e-resources. The present study also emphasized Intellectual property right issue and challenges regarding building of collection development. In Indian library system though stock verification is done at some intervals, collection analysis/evaluation is hardly done. Effective collection analysis and assessment provide quantitative and qualitative data for evaluating the usefulness and utility of library holdings.

Objectives:

The aim of academic library in collection building is meeting the changing needs and demands of the present and future. The following are the objectives of collection building:

1. Building up the collection in depth at a comprehensive level in all the necessary areas.
2. Supporting the research by acquiring and issuing the relevant documents to the research scholars.
3. Adopting systematic and judicious spending on document collection, keeping the objectives of collection building in mind.
4. Understanding the user needs and select documents according to their tastes.
5. To have a strong belief for a written development policy.

Meaning and concept of Collection Development:

➤ Collection development is a systematic and essential process of building library collection to fulfil the teaching, learning research need of its target users. It includes the acquisition, selection, evaluation and preservation of resources according to user's requirement.

➤ It is the composition and size of a collection that is a major determinant of the importance, value and quality of a library.

➤ Collection development is the selection of library materials keeping in view user's need and requirements.

Purpose of Collection Development Policy:

To build a balanced and relevant collection, it is necessary to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection. Collection development policy has many functions like describing current collections, providing a framework for developing and maintaining collections, assisting in budgeting, assisting staff to consider the long term and short term objectives of the organisation, prioritising different activities etc. It helps to develop a realistic and practical acquisition program for procuring resources for the future. It provides clear and specific guidelines for the selection, acquisition, storage, preservation, relegation and discard of stock. These policies can help in improving communication between the library and users and in enhancing understanding of the objectives of the library by administrators whose decisions influence resource allocation. The policies to be effective should be flexible and should be reviewed and revised periodically.

Need and Purpose of Collection Building:**Need:**

1. To enable the libraries to know the best methods of acquisition directly from the publishers or through vendors, by highlighting the merits and demerits of both method.
2. To assist the library professionals in establishing new methods of reviewing materials before purchase.
3. To assist in long range budget planning and identify the areas for which the priority is to be given.

Purpose:

1. To Promote cooperative acquisition.

2. To offer suggestions regarding weeding out of materials.

Collection Development Methods:

Different methods are followed to build the collection. Common methods usually followed in most of the universities libraries are:

1) Purchase Method:

The most common method of collection development is through purchase and it is that has been followed with at most care. The well known principle is 'best reading for the largest number at the least cost?.. Purchase method is of three types:

1) ON APPROVAL METHOD:

One of the common methods is to select and purchase of books out of those brought to the library by book sellers 'ON Approval'. According to this system, book sellers bring books to the library for the personal examination and selection of the librarians. The documents that are found suitable can be selected and ordered and the others can be returned. The main advantage is documents can be evaluated and selected by subject experts.

2) BOOK SELLERS/ PUBLISHERS CATALOGUES:

Another common method is buying the documents from the booksellers and selecting the documents from the publishers catalogues. Since documents are procured from the different booksellers, maximum discount can be obtained.

3) SERVICE BIBLIOGRAPHIES:

The most important method is the selection of documents on the basis of their reviews appearing on journals, news papers, and other media and bibliographies compiled as a service and by non – profit making agencies. Some examples are:

1. Books in print
2. Cumulative Book Index
3. British National Bibliography
4. Indian National Bibliography
5. Indian Books in print, etc.

The above are non- profit making agencies, rendering best tools for document selection. Following are the service agencies offering best source for document selection.

1. H.W. Wilson
2. R.R. Browker – USA
3. Whittaker – U.K etc.,

2. GIFT:

Another way of procuring the documents is in the way of gift. There are individuals and institutions willing to gift books to libraries. The idea, library will pay the attention in identifying and tapping such sources. These are valuable, useful and rare books which can be had in the manner. These are scholars who have their personal collections of valuable books which they have built up over a long period. Many Libraries have enriched their book stock

by acquiring such private collections. The Asuthosh Mukherjee collection of the National Library, Calcutta is a renowned example of how valuable, the donation of private collection can be done,. (Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee CSI, FASB, FRSE, FRAS, MRIA (29 June 1864 – 25 May 1924) was a Imperial (now National) Library Council to which he donated his personal collection of 80,000 books which are arranged in a separate section.

3. Exchange:

The library concerned or the parent institution of which it is part, may have its own publications, this is particularly true of research institutions, learned societies and universities. Publications of other institutions, both in India and abroad, can had in exchange of these publications. A prominent method adopted by research libraries for procuring journals is through exchange. The duplicate copies of valuable text books also can be exchanged.

Guiding Principles in Collection Building:

The following are the guiding principles for collection building:

- ✧ The requirement of each library should be brought to the notice of other countries.
- ✧ Updated catalogue is essential for exchange of documents.
- ✧ Definite policy is to be evaluated for resource sharing and networking.
- ✧ Identification of suitable vendors / Book sellers in the another requisites.
- ✧ Piece - for - Piece exchange (ie. Book for Books - Periodical for Periodicals), priced exchange and open exchange etc.. are to be analysed and the system seems to be best and advantageous should be selected.

Purpose of collection assessment and evaluation:

Assessment and evaluation of collection is necessary to find out if the library is collecting materials required by its clients and to gather data which will remedy deficiencies and improve collections. Academic libraries do evaluation for accreditation purposes, to assess the feasibility of new programs, to determine how well the library is implementing policy or how the policy should be revised on the basis of evaluation of data etc. Other reasons include funding purposes, analysing how the service community use the collection, monetary value of the collection, quantity and quality of collection to know weak areas, providing data for de-selection, co-operative efforts etc. Assessment is also done to find out institutional needs like adequacy of budget, whether collection is out dated, cost-benefit ratio is reasonable, providing data for funding agencies, networks, consortia, donors etc. (Kennedy, 2006).

Techniques of collection analysis:

Collection analysis techniques include use and user-centred approach where emphasis is on the individual user as the unit of analysis; collection-centred approach where collection is examined against an external standard or the holdings of other libraries that are comprehensive in the relevant area; quantitative analysis which is measuring collection/ circulation statistics, ILL requests, e-Resources usage, budget information, ratios such as expenditure for print resources in relation to e-Resources, serials in relation to monographs etc.; qualitative analysis which is subjective because it depends on the perception of

Collection-centred methods :

1. Collection profiling: Statistical description or numerical picture of the collection at one point in a time. e.g. Titles within a classification range, imprint years etc. It provides information for cooperative collection development and management and to identify weak areas.
2. Expert opinion: This method depends on personal expertise for making the assessment. It involves reviewing the entire collection using shelf list or a single subject area or shelf examination of various subject areas. Depth of the collection, its usefulness in relation to curriculum or research and deficiencies and strengths in the collection are estimated.
3. List checking: Checking to see whether library has access to a list of expert recommended books or journals. The list also includes general list or specialized bibliography, catalogues, course syllabus, list by professional associations or government authority, recommended reading lists, frequently cited journals list etc.
4. Verification studies: A form of list checking in which collections are checked against a special list of titles which encompass the most important works in a specific area.
5. Shelf scanning or direct collection analysis: The collection is physically examined by a person with subject knowledge and evaluates the breadth, depth, significance and level of collection, physical condition of materials etc.
6. Comparative statistics are used by libraries to determine strengths by comparing collection size and expenditure, expenditure and format, expenditure and preservation, rate of net growth, size of collection in volumes, titles, formats etc., degree of content overlap and unique holdings.
7. Applying collection standards: Collections are compared with standards developed by professional associations, accrediting agencies, library boards etc. They apply qualitative standards rather than quantitative recommendations and emphasize on addressing adequacy, access and availability (Johnson, 2009).

Client-centred methods:

1. Citation studies: Using citations/bibliographic references in articles and other scientific works as indicators of use or influence assuming that more frequently cited publications are more valuable. In academic libraries, receiving bibliographies from faculty and students to find out which books, journals or authors are popular and how many cited resources are available in the library.
2. Circulation studies: Using circulation reports, which resources are mostly used and less used, compare use patterns in select subject areas, type of materials etc.
3. In-House use studies: Mostly used in non-circulating periodical collections or to measure book usage in non-circulating sections. This method relies on cooperation from the users and can focus on materials used or the users of materials, a part of the collection or entire collection.
4. User surveys are conducted to find out whether the collections meet the users' needs and requirements qualitatively and quantitatively. The results identify user groups that require better service, improve public relations, receive feedback on drawbacks and successes and find out changing trends and interests.
5. Focus groups: A small representative group of people of about eight to ten selected from the user community engages in a discussion in an informal setting. Focus groups can identify issues, offer suggestions and detailed comments and provide opportunities to explore topics and issues in depth that cannot be covered in surveys.

6. Document delivery test determines the ability of the library in providing the user with a required item at the time of his need and provides objective measurement of a collection's capacity to satisfy user needs.

7. Inter library loan analysis: Reviewing ILL reports to find out the items patrons are using that are not available in the library, how often patrons resort to ILL vs. using local resources etc. Identify areas of collection not meeting patron needs and represent use of the collection because the deficient item is required by the patron. 8. Quantitative bench-marking: Comparing counts of books and journal holdings between library and peer libraries, comparing size of holdings on a subject to the enrollment in the corresponding department or budget for that department (Kohn, 2015).

Benefits of collection analysis:

Analysis of the collection provides a better understanding of the scope, depth and accuracy of collections, whether the collection meets the goals and mission of the library, aids in the preparation of a collection development policy, provides a measure for the effectiveness of the policy, ascertains the quality and adequacy of collections, rectify the inadequacies and improve the collection, explains decision about expenditures and provide justifications for budget increase (Mosher, 1979).

Collection Development Policies:

Collection development policy is an official document in which all the information regarding collection is written and consulted whenever it is needed. Policy is a written planning document for a library for building its collection intended to define objective of parent institution. It defines

- Written policies to state the purpose of the collection.
- MISSION OF Library.
- Library values.
- Statement of purpose.
- Covers the general areas of collection, such as selection.
- Methods of handling items, including gift items or other items.
- Methods of requesting purchases.
- Methods of challenging Titles.
- Act as a rational guide for budget allocation
- Contribute to operational efficiency in term of routine decision.
- Helps in determining the best method of acquisition.
- Forms the basis for planning collection development.
- Facilitates cooperative programmes like inter library loans, resource sharing network.

Written Collection Development Policy:

The primary task of any library is to collect, select, process and provide access to relevant resources available through libraries. A policy statement is a kind of frame work with certain parameters both for the library collection as well as library staff to work within the framework. This policy statements helps on setting the budget matters helps as a channel of communication both within and outside the libraries , collaborates cooperative collection

development. Preparation and review of a written policy should encourage the library and institution to define or refine their goals and help the library collection to conform the aims and objectives of the institution of the library, by translating those aims and objective into clear and specific guideline , for each stage of materials handling, selection, acquisition,processing etc..The primary reasons for having a written collection development policy can be narrated under four broad headings.

- 1) Selection
- 2) Planning
- 3) Public relations
- 4) The Wider context.

Key issues in collection building – Bloom Field:

The key issues identified in collection building according to Bloom field are:

- ❖ Identification of the purpose of the library organisation.
- ❖ Formulation of library's collection development policy by library committee.
- ❖ Matching between users requirements and institutions aims and objectives.
- ❖ Preparation of budgets and allocation of funds.
- ❖ Working out the strategies for implementing the policies and programmes, maintaining, revising and updating policy statement.

Weeding:

Weeding involves removing material from open access, reassessing its value and discarding or transferring to storage. De-selection or weeding is an important step in collection development without which the collection becomes aged and out-dated and difficult to maintain. The excess copies, rarely used books and materials which cannot be further used may be transferred to a different location in the library or sold and discarded. The funding bodies and administrative agencies may disapprove the disposition of materials for which money has been spent. Space constraint is a main factor motivating weeding and disposal, other reasons include ensuring continuous quality in the collection, to improve access, save money and make room for new materials. The items for de-selection could include unwanted gift materials, duplicates, obsolete and

Preservation:

Preservation involves protecting the materials from damage, deterioration and retaining the intellectual content of materials which can no longer be preserved. These include binding, repairing, using protective enclosures, monitoring environmental conditions, controlling use etc. It is considered as a librarian's responsibility to preserve the human record for future generations. Non print collections also need preservation. Digital resources and digitized files pose problems because of the different types of formats and the speed with which standards, software and hardware changes. Libraries with digital collections migrate the data or emulate obsolete hardware and software to retain the content. Digitization is used as a preservation treatment as it has the advantage of reducing the handling of the original artefact and making accessible to more people.

Challenges, Issues and Problems in Collection Development:

Library collections are becoming increasingly complex and diverse owing to many types of formats and managing and accessing these resources brings its own challenges. The libraries are dealing with print, electronic and digital formats and although technology has immensely enhanced the scope and use of these collections, the electronic formats in addition to the physical materials pose significant challenges in managing these heterogeneous collections. Selecting, acquiring and maintaining different types of e-Resources like e-books, e-journals, reference sources and full text journals which are multidisciplinary in nature is more complex than print resources.

Legal and access issues, technological compatibility and services for training and ease of use have to be taken care of. Continuous content evaluation is also required as the content of the resource may change over time. There can also be duplication of content across databases which results in confusion and wastage of investments. Lack of perpetual access is another issue. Many of the e-Resources may be licensed for a limited period and once the license period expires the subscription is cancelled. Preserving and archiving e-Resources therefore poses its problems.

Impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Library Collection Development:

Like all other fields, technology has revolutionized academic libraries also. Academic libraries have effectively made use of technology to respond to user demands by bringing changes in the nature of the collection. Though technology has not affected the core activities of collection development, its scope has been altered significantly. Transformative changes are taking place; the possibility of remote access has changed the nature of collections from what it was years back, philosophy has evolved from ownership to access and the implications are felt in all areas of planning, policy making, budgeting, services etc.

As pointed out by (Seetarama, 1997), collection development policies have to be redefined to balance ownership and access and to include cooperative efforts and evaluation. Earlier when collection development was purely print based, selection tools like publisher catalogues and trade bibliographies were used but today all the tools are electronically available. Traditional selection criteria like quality, relevance, cost, usage, etc. were considered and faculty and user suggestions for new titles were forwarded for purchase. With advancements in technology, ICTs are used in all areas of collection development activity like selection, acquisition, evaluation, cooperative efforts, etc. Selection involves making use of online publisher's catalogues, online book reviews, online sites, faculty-librarian communication for providing online suggestions and recommendations and online alert services. Acquisition work of pre-ordering and ordering process and communication with vendors make use of the ICT facilities. ICTs are also used in the evaluation process to measure circulation statistics, provide budget reports, e-Resources usage, online user surveys etc. Transaction log analysis of e-Resources provides information on the use of electronic journals and databases.

The greatest impact of e-Resource is increased access to information resources, speed of access and ease of access. Earlier researchers and faculty depended upon books, reference material, journals and case studies for information. With internet and telecommunication advancements, electronic resources are being profusely used by academicians. Online catalogues, high tech

information networks, and increased resource sharing have accelerated access to information. Budgets and grants are deployed in different ways that enhance the library's role in providing scholarly information and managing digital content. Collaborative arrangements for acquiring and managing digital resources have considerably reduced the cost. Consortia provide member libraries wider access to digital resources at affordable cost and best-licensing terms.

Conclusion:

Knowledge is power and library is the reservoir of the knowledge. Hence it is necessary to have a good balanced collection in every academic library in order to serve the needs of the reading community. With limited funds, the libraries have to satisfy many more academic libraries in India is to make use of all methods of book selection and purchase in a manner that the pit falls of each are guarded against as far as possible and as sound a collection development programme as possible in the prevailing circumstances. Collection development implies building up collection with quality material through proper acquisition and weeding policies.

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