

Collection Development and Services in Shekhawati Region Libraries: Encounters and Resolutions for Library Authorities

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Abstract: *The paper discussed about the importance of collection development in libraries. There are various factors that are taken into consideration while developing a quality collection for the benefit of the users. These factors include policies and principles, techniques and procedures, problems associated with collection/development and weeding out as well. It is equally important to evaluate the collections to know its use and moreover the collection development in electronic environment. Authors conclude that, library professionals need to take utmost care in developing a judicious collection, which enhances the quality of the library. It may be mentioned that, the paper is written on the basis of experience*

Keywords: Collection Development: Collection Development Policy: Collection Development Techniques: Weeding-out

I. INTRODUCTION

Libraries and their collections have existed for thousands of years. The existence of a library in Red Temple at Uric, dating from about 3000 B.C. proves the aforesaid statement. Collecting and organizing information and making it available to individuals have had a long history. A library collection is the sum total of library materials i.e. books, manuscripts, serials, government publications, pamphlets, catalogues, reports, recordings, microfilm reels, micro films, microfiche etc. Building a collection may occasionally involve the selection and acquisition of these materials, but in most cases it is the planning of the systematic development of the already existing collection. The library budget, available staff and space, policies established by the library either in terms of the variety and number of clientele served or in terms of the purposes and goals implicit in the institutional environment, in which the library works, are the governing factors for collection development of any library. The growth of most library collection is the fruit of great generosity and open-mindedness of the authority. Our libraries are the repositories of the wisdom of ages stored in the form of recorded information for use of present and future generations. Digital technology has made it more easy and comfortable to apply this wisdom. Earlier, the main task of the librarian was to select the reading material, which has now been extended to creation and maintenance of the website along with the existing duties. The recorded knowledge is to library, what heart and brain are to human body. Library collection has ranged from clay tablets to papyrus sheets, paper documents and silicon chips, optical and magnetic discs and so on. Collection and dissemination of information are the main functions of a library. Importance and success of library collection lies in the satisfaction of users' information needs. Academic libraries have a varied collection to fulfill the needs.

Purpose of Collection Development

Libraries and information centers normally are developing their collection in such a way that, they get more external readers, besides keeping in mind the need of the parent organization. The percentage organization allocated to long-term retention varies from organization to organization. Organizations operating in a placid-randomized environment tend to have a very large percentage of retained but not disseminated or used information. At the other end of the

spectrum, there is a very little difference between the two categories. The main purpose of collection development in a library can be as follows:

- To fulfill the library's obligation to its community,
- To find out the exact need of the readers,
- To make available the right document to the right reader at the right time through selection and acquisition process,
- To utilize the library budget judiciously,
- To periodically review the collection for weeding out,
- To share the resources through networking.

Collection development or information acquisition is one of the common areas between librarianship and information resource management. 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 should be the motto of the library staff. Collection development is a constant cycle that continues as long as the library or information Centre exists. .

Collection Development and Public

Collection development is influenced in a number of ways by factors both within and outside the library. Among these factors are the library's structure and organization with its objectives, production and distribution of the information materials and the procedure followed by other libraries in the area. The internal activities of the library are generally divided into public services and technical services. The activities in which the staff has daily contact with readers are usually considered as public service, whereas almost all other activities are technical services. After receiving the materials and clearing the records, the acquisitions department sends the items to the technical department for processing. The processed documents, after the physical processing, are released for display for public. But as one moves from one institution to the other, differences in emphasis on various elements of collection development process become apparent. According to Edward Evans, "three 'Laws' of collection development can be stated as universals:

- As the size of the service community increases, the degree of divergence in individual information needs increases.
- As the degree of divergence in individual information needs increases, the need for cooperative program of information materials sharing increases.

It will never be possible to completely satisfy all of the information needs of any individual or class of clientele in the service community."

Collection Development in Shekhawati Region Libraries

The effectiveness and efficiency of the library depend on the right selection of the library materials. Selection of library materials is of prime importance in a library. The librarian and the library staff study the users' need and in consultation with the readers, select the required materials keeping in view the objectives of the parent organization. The selection of the library materials require well-thought planning, knowledge of recently published materials in different subjects and in different media, knowledge on forthcoming books through the book reviews, selection of book vendors of repute, knowledge on the latest development on currency exchange and other related matter. Allocation of right budget to the right department for the right material is one of the major components in collection management.

Elements of Collection Development Policy

There are thousands of libraries and information centers with excellent, even outstanding collections, but having no collection development policy. The reason policies are lacking is that, they require a great deal of thought. A policy needs to reflect a changing community and their needs, therefore the librarians' thinking and collecting never ends. A policy statement provides a framework, within which individuals can exercise their own judgement and action. When a number of persons set policy without written guidelines, slightly different views of the library's purpose emerges.

Without written statements, the divergence of opinion creates confusion. With a policy statement, everyone has a central reference point. A policy document contains the following issues:

- Informs nature and scope of the collection,
- Forces to think about the organizational goals,
- Reduces the influence of the single selector,
- Guides staff in handling complaints,
- Aids in weeding and evaluating the collection

The elements of collection development policy, which needs to be reflected on the document are as follows:

- Institutional objectives
- Details of subject area
- Miscellaneous issues like gift, weed-out, evaluation, complaints and censorship
- Getting the policy approved after holding an open meeting for the members.

Guiding Principles

The library resources are procured both in print and non-print media. But the major portion of the collection is the books. The librarian is primarily responsible for the selection of the books even if there are subject experts to advise the librarian in this regard. This leads to follow certain guiding principles and theories for the selection of books. There are some principles propounded by some stalwarts in the field of Library science as follows:

- **Drury's book selection principle:** Francis Drury enunciated the book selection principle in the year 1930. According to him, the purpose of book selection is to provide the right book to the right reader at the right time
- **Dewey's Book selection principle:** Melville Dewey in 1876 stated that, the books selected for a library should be, the best reading for the largest number at the least cost.
- **Principles of McClain:** Lionel McClain gave his theory of book selection in public libraries. His principle was based on demand and supply theory of book selection. His theory emphasizes that the documents should be selected which are only demanded by the users for their specific needs and requirements. The demand should be evaluated by the librarian on the basis of their value, volume and variety.

Principles of Ranganathan: The principles of book selection were enunciated by Dr. S.R. Ranganathan on the basis of his five laws of Library Science in 1952.

- Books are for use: According to him only those documents should be selected which are extensively useful to the users of a particular library.
- Every reader his book: This implies that the users' needs are the prime considerations in book selection.
- Every reader its book: The law directs that every reader in the library must get books as and when required.
- Save the time of the reader: The implication of this law is that the books should be selected anticipating the demand of the readers and should be processed and sent to the shelves in order to save the time of the readers.
- Library is a growing organism: This implies that library should take care of weeding out and the existing collection should be divided into two parts on the basis of its use i.e. active collection and passive collection.

The guiding principle for any kind of academic library needs to be guided by the aims and objectives of the type of library in terms of the kind of its readers and their need.

Collection Development Techniques and Procedures

Before adopting different techniques and procedures for collection development, it is necessary to identify the type of documents to be purchased and amount of budget allocated for the purpose. A train of characteristics can be applied for the types of documents. It can be classified as conventional-non-conventional, general-reference, basic-special, native-foreign publications. Once the types of documents to be selected are known, next step is to find out the levels of selection.

The selection criteria for books, reference books, textbooks, fiction, non-fiction and non-book materials vary and the librarian has to be very careful in selecting the items. Authoritativeness of the author and publisher, presentation of the

contents, library value, and price plays a major role for the selection of books, whereas for selecting a reference book one has to select the indexing and bibliographic value of the document and to see to it whether it complements the existing collection or not. The selection policy in relation to the selection of material is the major issue of each library, which needs to be followed as follows:

- In any academic library the librarian has to decide whether the selection would be based on instructions or research material as procuring of foreign books is very expensive.
- The librarian should see to it that the essential reference books come under this category.
- The current editions need to be prioritized over old editions.
- The research documents should be procured on the basis of the demand by the readers.
- The librarian needs to scrutinize the number of copies to be acquired. However multiple copies may be avoided.

Once the selection policy is finalized next question is who will select the documents?

Library Committee

The body formally invested with the governance of a library is the library committee. In a university setup, the library committee is the organ of the executive council or academic council. The functions of a library committee are as follows:

- Formulate library policy in relation to development of resources,
- Advise in the allocation of book budget department wise,
- Advise on the policy of reproducing unique materials,
- Developing a general program of library services for the interest of the parent organization,
- Ensuring coordination between the library and various departments,

A library committee is an omnipresent feature of the academic libraries all over the world. It is assigned as advisory rather than administrative in nature. However, the policies approved by the library committee are subject to approval by the Head of the institution. Members of the library committee are mostly those, who are directly involved with the library services like Dean and Heads of the Departments, Head of the Accounts etc. However the librarian acts as the member secretary/convener.

According to Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, the father of library science in India, “the management of most of the types of libraries is usually vested in committees. Such committees derive their powers from a larger parent body, which manages the larger organization, of which the library forms a part”. The Library committee recommended that, “the authority concerned should provide a panel of experts in different subjects to help the librarian in making the final selection of reading materials”. The Library Committee

- Serves as a buffer agency between the library authority and the librarian,
- Serves as an interpreter of the requirements of the library community and the authority,
- Pleads for more funds realizing the need,
- Helps in the acquisition of books and journals and other materials and formulation of guidelines of such acquisitions,
- Formulation of guidelines for periodic stock verification,
- Allocation of tasks to the library staff,
- Formulation of guidelines for library discipline,

The library committee serves in an advisory capacity and formulates library policies in co-operation with the Librarian for the development of higher learning and research.

Library Budget

For financial resources, the librarian has to depend on the parent organization and the parent organization has to function as per the instructions of the Ministry. In this hierarchical administration, the library never gets adequate budget provision, however justified the need may be. As and when there is squeeze in the budget, the library becomes the first victim to face it. The library budget can come under plan or non-plan head of account. The staff salary and

other recurring expenditure come under non-plan budget whereas purchase of library materials, stationery items and binding budget is met from the plan budget. Once the library budget is allotted, it becomes the responsibility of the librarian to allocate the budget in different heads like purchase of books, journals, non-book material and library furniture along with provision for binding and contingency. The budget allocation for purchase of books again varies from library to library. Usually in college/university libraries; the book budget is distributed among different Departments.

Vendors

The vendors include the registered members of FPBAI (Federation of Publishers, Booksellers Association of India), DSBPA (Delhi State Booksellers and Publishers Association), NGOs and Government Departments like NCERT, NBT, and Ministry of Information & Broadcasting etc. The authors, publishers, book sellers, libraries and readers act as different links in information communication chain from the source to the destination. Here, the author acts as the source, whereas the reader is the destination. The author writes, the publisher publishes, and the bookseller takes care of the marketing. As a result the reader gets benefited for the academic research. The libraries choose the reputed vendors in a panel to facilitate the supply of the reading materials. The associations set certain rules and regulations and abide by the framed rules for the benefit of the public. This creates a healthy atmosphere for distribution of library materials. The librarians require the vendor's registration number, copy of the PAN card, latest income tax clearance certificate and sales tax/VAT registration certificate to validate the authenticity of the vendor status. Usually the libraries and vendors follow all the rules of GOC (Good Offices Committee) except conversion rate for foreign currencies. In this case, few libraries follow the official exchange rate whereas other libraries follow RBI (Reserve Bank of India) exchange rate for conversion of rupee.

Subcommittees

The subcommittees are constituted for the selection, evaluation and weeding out of library books. These committees prepare the acquisition policy, weeding out policy and after approval of the policies by the library committee. The members help in implementing the same with the cooperation with the librarian and the library staff.

Book selection tools

The librarian cannot be an expert in each and every subject. Hence, the importance of the subject experts plays a major role in this regard. The sources for book selection can be identified as follows:

- Readers' suggestion,
- Book Reviews,
- Bibliographies

Besides these, several publishers and booksellers of repute publish their catalogues and newsletters from time to time, in which they mention their latest titles.

Non-book materials

A library is a repository of books and other types of materials with various types of physical characteristics, such as serials, cartographic materials, graphic materials, audio-visual materials, materials in the electronic media and so on. The library materials in various physical forms need to be collected by the libraries as per the requirement. The selection of such kind of documents should be on the basis of the demand by the users. The selection principles need to be based on the authority, accuracy, effectiveness of presentation, usefulness for particular purpose and so on. The particular type of material is chosen for a particular type of purpose and for the presentation of a particular topic. The selection and acquisition of non-book materials depend upon the factors like the type of library and the clientele. There must be a collection development policy for the non-book materials. Besides the traditional non-book materials, the library takes initiative for the development of digital collections.

Serials

The term serials is used as a broader term, which includes the periodically published documents known as periodicals, journals, magazines, bulletins, newsletters, house journals, proceedings of the learned body and research institutions, newspapers etc. This is one of the important collections of any library next to books. These are the publications of continuous nature, published in a regular interval. Selection of serials is made after taking appropriate decision after assessment and evaluation of each title and considered to be essential for collection development. The qualitative criteria have to be followed during the process of selection. The librarians face different kinds of problems during the different steps of acquisition like selecting, ordering and receiving. The section receives a lot of demand for acquisition of different titles in different core areas pertaining to different subjects. As a result, the section faces financial crunches. On the other hand, journals are the most important source of information as it contains the latest information in the form of research findings, survey reports and field studies reports etc. This acts as the primary source for the research scholars. But the subscription prices of the journals are ever increasing due to the price hike in the cost of paper, printing etc. The changing characteristics of the journals are change in title, merging of titles/issues etc. The librarian of the periodical section has to be very careful in certain points like:

- Budget allocation,
- Preparing the current subscription list after review,
- Placing the order(Direct or through vendor),
- Preparing the gap-in supply letter,
- Verifying the bills/in-voices,

There are advantages and disadvantages in both the systems. But it is better to place bulk orders through the vendors/agents to smoothen the administrative formalities after finalizing the trade discount, handling charges, postage through surface mail or air mail, conversion rates for foreign currencies, guarantee for the replacement of issues not received or refund of the cost of the issues not supplied, access to online journals free of cost or not. Besides, the journals-in-charge should verify certain points from the libraries of repute located nearby. Now-a-days many libraries have started procuring e-journals. However before ordering for the e-journals, the librarians have to get the static IP address from the IT department of the institute, which is mandatory for their subscription.

Graphic and Cartographic materials

Graphic materials are the non-reading visual library documents and these include illustrations, pictorial cards, photographs, etchings, engravings, pictorial representations and visual descriptions. Charts, plans, slides and other visual representations may also be grouped under this category.

Cartographic materials are visual graphics in nature. They contain the visual representation of the earth and different parts of it under particular topics. They supplement the reading materials for advancement of learning. The materials include: globes, maps, atlases etc. A globe is a physical representation of the earth whereas maps can be divided into physical, political and special purposes (which depict specific subjects).A map is most important for the theme it represents

Problems in Collection Development

In each and every library irrespective of the size and nature, there are problems during collection development. The problems faced are as follows:

- Increased number of books published,
- Increase in the cost of the books and journals,
- Availability of library materials in various physical medium,
- Increased demand of the readers,
- Fluctuation in the exchange rate,

Collection Management

Once the library materials are procured, the actual job of the library begins how to manage the acquired literature. The accessioning, classification, cataloguing, required physical preparation of the documents, releasing the documents to be displayed in the new arrival, proper shelving of the library materials, making available the shelf guides, bay guides to the readers in an open access environment, maintaining the reference section properly are the different aspects of collection management in libraries in case of new books. The Circulation section and Reference section of the libraries have indirect role in upgrading the collection of the libraries. The statistics of the circulation counter shows the much demanded subjects; whereas the reference section helps in filling the gap in collection.

Similarly the care and preservation of documents also play a major role in optimum use of the library materials. Care of the library materials help increase their lifespan and protect them from being lost. Library materials are to be saved from the climatic variations, direct light, dust, and dirt, various types of insects, fire and human beings readers. There are certain documents, which are frequently used and need minor repairs, mending and binding. There are some readers, by whom the issued books are lost and they show their inability to replace the title and wish to recover the cost of the book. In this circumstance, the price is recovered and the title is withdrawn from the stock. When the library collection becomes old and vast, the librarian puts before the library committee to constitute a weeding out committee in which all the departments are involved.

Resource Sharing

Resource sharing is a sort of implied agreement among participating libraries, wherein each participating library is willing to spare its resources to other members and in turns privileged to share the resources of its partners as and when the need arises. The objectives of resource sharing can be achieved through networking of libraries and information centers using interactive computer systems and telecommunication facility for the explicit purpose of resource sharing. Now-a-days, this has become possible through DELNET (Developing Library Network), useful links and availability of library database in Web-OPAC and Union OPAC.

Collection Development in Electronic Environment

Now a day we have moved from a time of huge resources to a time of largely static budget and many more demands by the readers. This has shifted the focus of collection development from local collection building to more cooperative ventures that have come on the forefront during the recent years. In the digital era, the roles of librarians have changed and now they have to act as information mediators. To make this role more important, the librarians have to add more value to the information as it moves through this chain. The procurement of on-line database (Bibliographic/indexing/abstracting) is the part of collection development in electronic environment. To mention a few are as follows:

- ERIC
- Social science citation index
- Sociological abstract
- Psych INFO
- JSTOR

In the electronic environment, computer based systems have the advantages of access to external databases which can be explored. Bibliographic access to the holdings of an individual library, on a specific subject or access to the union catalogue (if available) is possible in a computerized environment. Concerning the objectives and geographical boundaries, the library network can be local Area Network (LAN). Wide Area Network (WAN) or Metropolitan Area Network (MAN), National Network or International Network. The librarians of this age have to prepare themselves to adapt to these new changes. However there are a lot of problems in electronic management of documents as follows:

Complicated procurement and preservation system,

- Technological obsolescence,
- Non compatibility of organizational culture to digital environment,
- Financial constraints,
- Resistance to change,

Weeding Out the Collection

Selection in reverse is one way that some persons like to think about weeding or selection control. Weeding is something most librarians think about but seldom do. This process is as important as other activities of the library. Weeding-out means discarding from the library collection because it is unfit for further use or is no longer needed. Before a weeding out program is implemented, an evaluation of library policies and goals must take place. This evaluation should include analysis of the present situation, consideration of possible alternatives, feasibility of a weeding out program in terms of all library operations, faculty co-operation, types of libraries involved, types of materials collected and cost. Selection and weeding are similar activities. Both require the same type of decision making rules. The important reasons for weeding out are: to save space, to improve access & to make room for new materials. Weeding is a process to which everyone gives lip service, but few librarians are able or willing to practice the art. Some of the most frequent excuses for not weeding are: lack of time, putting it off, fear of making a mistake & fear of being called a "book burner. Weeding out is not an overnight process and is not a function that can be performed in isolation from other collection development activities.

Evaluation of Collection

Evaluation completes the collection development cycle and is closely tied to needs assessment activities. Collection evaluation involves both quantitative and qualitative values. The main objectives of evaluation are to know: how useful is the collection, strengths of the collection, and how effectively the money is spent. In order to achieve the goals of evaluation, the following points need to be kept in mind:

- What is the true scope of the collection(subjects covered)
- What is the depth of the collection(type of material)
- How the collection is used
- What are the strong areas of collection
- What are the weak areas of collection

The above points can be evaluated through five general approaches, such as compiling statistics on holdings, checking bibliographies, obtaining opinion from regular users, examining the collection directly, and listing the library's document delivery capacity.

II. CONCLUSION

The library is the trinity of the readers, resources and staff. Without the readers the parent organization cannot think of the existence of the library. Once the readers are there, then arises the procurement of reading material. After the reading materials are acquired, then it becomes the responsibility of the library staff to technically process and organize for the right use by the right readers. In order to meet the goal of the library and increase the usage of the library material, the librarian plays a pivotal role. The librarian must know the purpose of collection development, policy of collection development, availability of latest documents worldwide in print and non-print media along with internet resources on different subjects. The organization and maintenance of the reading materials also play a major role, which can mar the reputation of the library and can be helpful in increasing the usage of the library materials. The librarian need to be computer literate and should know to work in a networked environment in order to meet the objectives of resource sharing and cooperative collection management.

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