



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT IN THE COLLEGE LIBRARIES: PLANNING AND PROCESS

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Abstract:

Collection of any library is the basic thing to provide any kind of library service to the users. Well developed and up-to-date collection is the key to satisfy information needs. The objective of college library is to cater to the needs of its members comprising of students, faculty and other staff members of the institution. The academic courses offered by the college, syllabus and participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities decides the type and variety of the library collection. Collection development is a continuous process. Also various types of information sources are required to be procured by the library. New web based services and internet facility plays crucial role in encouraging research in the college. Self sufficiency is a dream in this information age for any library. Considering these facts this paper focuses on different aspects of collection development, basic steps to develop collection and how to keep it up to the mark by way of participative approach of the users.

KEYWORDS :-

library service , Collection development , process, management .

INTRODUCTION :-

Library is an information centre where user's needs are satisfied in a best possible manner by developing suitable library collection and designing various types of services. To achieve its objectives library has to design a set up to support its objective of satisfying user needs and demands. Collection development is the main area of the library where due attention is awaited for giving effective services to the readers. Collection development is about acquiring, developing and maintaining various reading resources and making them accessible for users. If seen in simple terms it appears like acquiring the required material and giving it to users. But it is not so. Actually collection development is a dynamic and continuous process. No library can collect all the material required for the readers at one time and rely on it. This fact has been correctly highlighted by Dr. S R Ranganathan in his golden library rules saying that library is a growing organization. Over the period of time collection gets developed. But in no way one can say that yes, my library collection is complete and required no more addition. Different factors are responsible for this. There are additions to existing information every day, developments in the respective fields, new technology and many others.

Title:COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT IN THE COLLEGE LIBRARIES: PLANNING AND PROCESS. Source:Review of Research [2249-894X] Anjali M. Bhide yr:2012 vol:2 iss:3

Collection development:

Harrod's Librarian's Glossary (6th ed. 1987) defines collection development as "The process of planning a stock acquisition programme not simply to cater for immediate needs but to build a coherent and reliable collection over a number of years, to meet the objectives of the services."

This is a very exhaustive definition where complete idea about the collection, its goals and objectives, process, management and the future implications are covered in the definition.

Collection development in college libraries:

Academic field is the first area to take a note of any development in the respective field as these changes influence the existing pattern as learning; research and development go together hand in hand. Therefore in academic environment collection development process is more complicated as there is a change in the types of courses, structure of courses, developments in the respective subjects, updating of syllabus, additions to reference material, introduction of new information resources and also introduction of new courses. In education continuous improvements are introduced to keep it usefulness for the progress of society.

Collection of any library is the primary indicator for the quality of services provided for its users. Though looks simple, in academic environment the word collection development is actually coated with different aspects relating to functioning of the library. This includes objectives of the parent institution, courses, syllabus, user needs, library services, budget, procurement, weeding, types of material, extra and co-curricular activities, various club activities, workshops, career guidance, archiving etc.

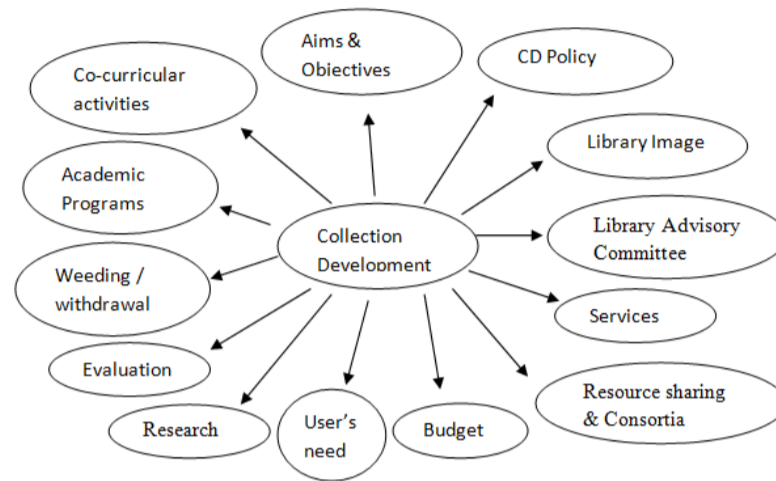
Composition of the library collection represents the different types of information sources that are present in the library. Recent developments in the electronic and communication world have changed the face of information sources with different types of products entering the information market. They provide access to different types of material through different media which is beneficial for the users. There is less dependency on the printed materials.

In NAAC guidelines library is shown under the criteria "infrastructure and support services". Further it has separate section under the heading 'Library as a learning resource centre' where complete picture of the library is visible in the form of data and figures. In this library collection of the library is reflected in much detailed way with bifurcation of collection under various categories like text books, reference books, career oriented books, expenditure incurred per annum, journals and magazines, CDs and DVDs, databases, online journals etc. so as to know the richness and the capacity of the library to serve its readers. Collection is a base for introducing any kind of services to its users. It also focuses on the feedback, withdrawals etc.

The main aim of the college library is to accomplish objectives of the parent organization. In fact library exists to fulfill the aims and objectives of the institution. And hence it serves the members of the institution only. Of course in some cases services are extended to other public also. But this is a rare phenomenon. The users comprise of students, faculty and non-academic staff members of the college. Library facility may be extended to members of college management and other members appointed in the various committees.

CD means not only adding books and other resources in the library, but all other process involved in making it available to the users for their use. CD should not be related only to the total number of books and other resources added every year. The equation that the more the number of resources added every year means proper CD does not stand very correct though number is also important. Satisfaction of the users should increase with addition of new resources in the library. Though the total number of resources gives impressive picture of library the usefulness of the collection is a crucial aspect from the view point of users. Library will fail in doing the duty of information provider if poor resources are added. Therefore building quality collection continuously by reviewing the existing procedures and doing usage analysis becomes necessary for satisfaction of the user community.

Components of Collection Development in Academic Library:



Source: Author

STEP BY STEP CD PROCESS:

Librarian is not an expert in the subjects and courses thought in the particular institution. But the responsibility of providing required information entirely lies with the library. He has to take initiative to build necessary infrastructure of library resources and chalk out services suitable to meet the demands of the users. Librarian has to begin this process with the cooperation of users and especially faculty members of the college. Basic requirement is the collection of books, journals and other reading material. Accordingly it is expected to create a mechanism with proper procedure to add resources to the library. The addition of these resources in a planned manner and within the limit of budget is termed as collection development in the library. Involvement and support from the faculty is a major factor in having reliable and up-to-date collection over a period of time. At the same time instead of depending on faculty completely librarian can use various tools that are available at his disposal for planning the CD process. He also can develop new mechanism where he takes initiative to go ahead with balanced collection. Mapping the usefulness of the collection is one such tool that can be developed by having various types of records and statistics and the feedback. Though all round development of the students is one of the objectives of the higher education, academic excellence is the first and foremost concern of all educational institutions. Hence availability of basic learning material should be the first priority. All courses that are introduced has well framed syllabus with details of topics and their coverage, number of lectures and marks allotted to each chapter. Thus In the syllabus of the course detailed portion of the subject is included in chapter form and sub topics. It is further accompanied with the list of books, journals and websites etc along with bibliographic details required for procurement which supports the syllabus of the respective paper. In each subjects there exists plenty of titles in the book world. With this readymade list faculty is relieved of search mission to find suitable and comprehensive titles for the subjects. Also it helps in bringing some sort of uniformity in teaching the particular subject where many teachers teach the same subjects for different class divisions. Faculty makes use of these books on priority for teaching the subject in the class. Hence all these books comprise the core stuff for beginning the collection development process in any academic library. Thus Syllabus of the course acts as a base for beginning the CD in academic library. Library should possess at least one copy of each of the title included in the reference section. For adding these books the recommendation from the faculty is easier. From his/her own experience

of usage of the book faculty then can recommend the addition of more copies of any of these titles. Next one is the subscription of journals recommended in the syllabus. The first point about the subscription is that usually journals are costlier and also it needs continuity for having valuable library collection. In case of foreign publication journals are highly priced which is beyond the capacity of the library to start and sustain with the subscription rates. Therefore this part should be dealt with utmost care. The recommendation and support of the library advisory committee is of utmost need. Before starting with the subscription directly one can request for specimen or sample copy, table of content pages of previous issues etc from the publisher or else can take help of other libraries having the particular journal title. In colleges at undergraduate level very little of research work is expected from the students. In case of faculty different research interest exists among them and therefore titles with common interest is the solution for coping with the budget provisions. This can be complimented by searching free journals on the net in related subjects. Plenty of journals are available free on the net and information may be provided through by using various ways of communication and also by including such sites on the institution's website.

General magazines and newspapers enjoys first place in the list of subscription because of their nature and content and reading habit of the people in any library and so true regarding academic libraries. In case of various websites mentioned in the syllabus they are free on the net for browsing purpose. They usually pertain to organizations, government departments and other institutions in the respective subject. In case of CDS/DVDs etc references are not mentioned in the syllabus. They can be kept at the end of the priority list. But when they are accompanied with books & magazines, library should make it a point to bring them to the notice of the users. This strategy helps in making a good start for CD program in the library. Once this basic reading material is made available for the users the librarian can concentrate on building supplementary reading stuff.

Many a times library users are not aware of new publications in the subject or other general books. Hence there is no demand for them from the users. Librarian's first job is to make awareness about the new titles published among the users. This is a kind of marketing for addition of useful titles for the library. There are various methods to comply this issue. There are many publishers who send their catalogue regularly to the library. Librarian can send them to the respective departments. Also same can be displayed on notice board with a note for recommendation. Library can also request for e-mail alert/messages etc to check new titles in the related subjects. Book reviews written by the readers in the dailies and magazines are helpful in knowing the usefulness of subject titles. This practice can help library to build reference collection with many and latest titles.

Library can arrange for book exhibitions with the book sellers. Here users get opportunity to see, feel and refer the title of his interest. For this reason the selection from the exhibition becomes very effective. To maintain the quality of books displayed librarian can instruct the book seller to include particular type of books, publishers, subjects, publication year etc based on the perspective demand. All users should be encouraged to visit and suggest titles of their interest. Recommended titles should be checked in all respect before finalizing the order weighing their usefulness. These titles should be made available for reading on priority basis to all. They can be displayed in new arrival rack, list on the website, notice board etc. to announce their availability or other method followed by the library. Usually users are excited to read the selected item immediately and therefore their eagerness should be framed by processing these books immediately.

User centric approach:

Faculty recommendation is the base for addition of books in the library. Their demand come directly to the librarian as per the laid procedure and receives priority. But sometimes students may find these titles less useful because of high level language and explanation or they find difficulty in searching for relevant information from the many chapters. Student's expectation from the title is very different. They want to see the book as per the topics given in the syllabus even the title of the book should match the title of the respective paper. Books are not

tailor-made as per the students' requirements. Therefore they look for other books where they can find themselves comfortable in reading, understanding the matter and making notes. Here librarian can help in getting such books demanded by students. Circulation desk is the right place to take note of such demands where students exchange their thoughts and communicate their requirements through various inquiries and request for different books and their comment. Students usually express their satisfaction/dissatisfaction or views with the person at the issue counter. Here such views can be noted and recorded in the file which can be later given to the librarian for necessary action. One more way is to make students aware to come forward and put their demand for books with the library staff. Another way is to nominate one student from each class to shoulder responsibility of recording the student's demand regarding their book requirements. Other way is to note the titles that are mostly circulated and titles that are included in reservation/demand by the students. The books noted through this exercise should be listed and forwarded to concerned faculty for obtaining necessary approval or otherwise as per the library procedure. These titles should be mentioned at the beginning of the priority list.

Reference collection:

Reference collection consists of books like encyclopedias, dictionaries, guides, maps, yearbooks, general knowledge books etc. They help in supplementing day to day queries and various students' activities. They are useful for all. Subject encyclopedias and subject dictionaries are the most referred reference books in college libraries as they are dedicated to particular subject which helps in clearing doubts and makes through understanding of the various concepts easy.

General collection:

This collection in college library consists of general knowledge books, biographies and autobiographies, novels, storey, drama etc, personality development, career development books, travel, history etc. These books are not directly related to any subject. But they are needed to be read for self development of the members. With competitive exam books and career books students can get information about the career opportunities in his field. At the college level they can start preparation for the entrance exams for next course. For pursuing professional courses after graduation clearance of entrance exam is the first step. The relevant study material has to be made available at the college level in the library. At the same time they need inspirational books that can boost confidence and morale and shape their personality. Also students participate in many events and competitions which require sufficient backing of good reading stuff. Apart from these educational environment students need to read novels and other books for entertaining themselves. Career and general magazines, CDS etc. should be added this collection.

Other resources:

Newspapers, Journals and magazines form other types of reading material which are popular among the readers for their very nature of publication and short life. Their coverage of current topics and various styles of presenting it in the form like articles, interviews, cartoons, stories etc. with photos and illustrations make it more interesting. Here day-to-day news updates, information, personal development and entertain all does hand in hand free from classroom stress. They play great role in developing reading habit among the students. Considering these factors college library should subscribe and make available newspapers and general magazines for reading. Journals are mostly used by the faculty members for updating their subject knowledge, doing research and writing articles. In the syllabus like books, list of journals is also provided under each paper. A complete list of all these journals from the syllabus should be prepared for subscription process. It has been observed that many a times journals listed are of foreign publication which are very costly. It becomes very difficult to accommodate all journals prescribed in the syllabus. There are many journals that are published in all subjects. Therefore library can subscribe Indian reputed/peer reviewed journals in the subject. Indian journals are useful for under graduate students as they are the beginners in the research field. Journals are to be subscribed continuously for building the collection for future reference. The cost of journals

always increases and therefore before finalizing the titles these points should be considered. To cope with all this, library should prepare a complete list and check the subscription details and budget provision and cost of subscription. At least one journal from each subject should be selected. Publisher's catalogue, emails, list from other colleges etc. are the sources of information about the journals that are published in various fields.

E resources:

Online material like e books, e journals etc. enjoys special features opposite print one. Library should also consider addition of such resources to the library. The utility of such material should be checked regularly because the cost is generally high. But the access is all the time with great speed. With the advent of library consortia and Government initiatives like INFLIBNET e resources are now affordable for colleges. At the same time there are many free /open resources available for all. Library should have information about such resources to supplement the print collection and user's need. Awareness about the availability of free educational stuff should be made among the student community so that they can improve their studies. These sites can be linked to college library website for direct access. This exercise will help in developing good collection of online resources. CDs and DVDs also can be added to the collection depending on the content coverage and need of the users.

Analyses:

Mapping the utility of the collection is very important component of the CD. This talks about the usage of the library collection. There are various methods to do the analyses. Library has to maintain various records for this purpose. The number of library visitors and their purpose is the key indicator. Next is the daily data of book circulation, use of journals and magazines, usage statistics from online resource providers are the main source of information for analyzing the usage of collection. Report system in the library software should be designed to provide circulation data book wise and reader wise, demands of students, most circulated title etc. This will take the usage analyses of collection to a next level.

Another effective way is to undertake survey of the users. Regular users can be targeted to learn about their feelings about the library services. Questionnaire should give scope for suggestions and comments. Analyses of this data certainly helps in improving the library functioning. Library staff shall be able to concentrate on CD based on evidences of actual data.

Weeding:

Regular weeding and withdrawal of books and other resources is effective that helps in maintaining useful and active library collection. Based on the various usage data and the academic programs resources can be withdrawn from the collection. This requires a well designed weeding policy which can use various records and feedback system as a base for doing the needful job. This will keep a check on addition of books, number of copies to be added etc. and will built effective collection.

Resource sharing:

College library on its own is not able to satisfy user's needs completely. A memorandum of understanding with other libraries in the region for availing inter library loan service should be accepted. This shall avoid unnecessary investments which is sometimes not useful with respect to its utility. Demands which are rare and not frequent can be met with such arrangements. Similarly library should participate actively by sharing its own resources whenever needed.

Inter library loan:

Inter Library loan facility is the best solution for overcoming difficulties in satisfying user's need. There are some demands are that are situational or occurs very rarely, some are beyond expectation of the librarian. To attend such demands inter library loan service is very helpful. Even if you have information about this type of demand it is not possible to acquire all the

resources in the library. Also it is a solution for overcoming financial crises.

Consortia:

Library should take membership of consortia to have greater coverage of resources available for its users. These resources are available at concessional rates and helps in avoiding acquisition of irrelevant material along with other information packages from the publisher.

In short one can say that the process of CD in the library is a long process which continues along with the existence of any academic institution. It is a count of overall progress of the college over the years. The user community of the library should be the main focus while adding any resources to the library and at the same time counting its usefulness and taking initiative on the part of the library to improve the usage is also equally important. Hence librarian should get himself acquitted with the academic program of the college to build promising image of the library.

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