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Trends in Collection & Collection Development Practices in University libraries with a particular reference to India and other developing countries: A review of literature

Collection & Collection Development in University libraries

The distinctive roles played by the University libraries through their librarians and information professionals is that they gather, systematize and synchronize access to the most preeminent available information resources for their library patrons as opined by **(Beverly, Both & Bath, 2003)**. In this milieu, while **Ahmad (1984)** analyses the contemporary procedures, practices, applications and operations of University libraries. **Cholin (2005)** pointed out that the key activities of University libraries that which makes them functional in real essence includes “*collection development, document delivery, services, user education, access to resources held by the library, access to other library resources, and access to electronic resources*”. Accordingly, commenting upon the status of collection in University libraries **Joshi (2015)** reports that collection in University libraries of North India comprises of both print as well as e-information resources. Similar findings are resonated in the studies conducted by **Prakash and Patil (2013)** in central University libraries in India; **Sasikala, Nagaratnamani and Dhanraju (2015)** in University libraries of Andhra Pradesh; **Ameyaw and Entsua-Mensah (2016)** in University library of Ghana; **Simisay (2012)** in Nigerian University libraries. Moreover, **Ameen (2006)** reveals that collection of University libraries in Pakistan comprises predominantly of books followed by serial publications viz; newspapers, magazines and journals. In tune with same **Ghosh and Panda (2010)** highlight the status of serials collection in the libraries attached to the Premier Institutions of India. The study reveals that the major proportion of budget for collection development is spent on subscription of serials based on information needs of users. On the other hand **Gohel and Parmar (2013)** concludes that merely one fourth of the total book collection fulfil the information requirement of users in Indian University library from available collection. In the same vein, **Simisay (2012)** reports the non-availability of required information resources in Nigerian University library. **Nkechi (2015)** highlights that University library in South East Zone of Nigeria lacks current foreign journals besides local journals lack continuity. On the other hand **Mansour (2017)** reveal that South Valley University (SVU) libraries comprises of adequate print collection but lags behind in non-print collection viz; CDs/DVDs, audio-visual materials, microfilm and microfiche, online resources and electronic materials, respectively. Accordingly, in view of immense importance of collection development in libraries, researchers put forward an overview of collection development practices in

University libraries. In this regard Kaplan (as cited in Chandel & Saikia, 2012) highlight about the major elements of collection development that needs to be taken into due consideration by academic libraries which includes “*budgeting, type of information resources, selection, acquisition and ultimately evaluation of information resources*”. A study by Gupta (1992) gave brief account of collection development in Indian University libraries after the Independence. Moreover, Pradhan (2016) reveals that University library of Orissa are following suitable collection development practices which is evident from the impressive growth and overall development of University library despite of having new origin. Khan (2016) conducts a comparative analysis of collection development patterns among the four central University libraries of Uttar Pradesh (UP). The findings evidently reveal that newly centralized University libraries are lagging far behind the old centralized University libraries in collection development practices. Sasikala, Nagaratnamani and Dhanraju (2014) examine the trends in collection development activities in academic libraries of Andhra Pradesh. The analysis reveal that although some of the libraries are adopting innovative means for collection development however, majority of libraries are still following traditional collection development practices involving conventional ways. Giri, Sen and Mahesh (2015) examine the collection development process in five major academic libraries of New Delhi to assess the prevailing policies as well as practices for deciding the number of books required in multiple copies. It was evident from the study that there was no stability in the approach for the procurement of the same. Khan and Bhatti (2016) conduct an analysis of collection development in the University libraries of Pakistan to investigate the factors, which had an impact on collection development and management in University libraries. Chaputula (2014) investigates the collection development practices in private University libraries in Malawi, which reveals that these practices vary significantly from University to University however; common problem faced by all University libraries is the lack of adequate funding. Furthermore, Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015) reports about collection development in Nigerian academic libraries, which reveals that there, are numerous flaws in overall process of collection development viz; lack of a coordinating unit for collection development activities, low participation of faculty in book selection and irregular weeding of stock etc. In line with same Fombad and Mutula (2003) surveyed collection development practices at the University of Botswana library which reveals that the process is marred due to declining budget for books, increase of e-resources, difficulties of dealing with faculty, poor book trade infrastructure, lack of timely delivery of ordered books, and problems of evaluation of materials. Al-Ogla (2006) reports that the collection development in the King Saud University Libraries is not up to the mark. In the same vein Das (2015) conducts a

comparative study of collection development of e-resources in University libraries of West Bengal. The findings divulge that University libraries lack sufficient budget, staff, and collection development policy for e-resource, which resulted in inadequate e-resources in these libraries. **Susana Sanchez Vignau and Lourdes Presno Quesada (2006)** examine the collection development in a digital environment with focus on user-oriented concept for developing digital collections. In tune with same **Flatley and Krista (2009)** conducted a survey of current practices related to collection development of e-resource in academic libraries which reveals that majority of libraries do not have a well-defined procedure meant for selecting and deselecting e-resources.

Collection Development Practices in University Libraries

Collection development (CD) emerges out to be the most important rather fundamental aspect of library and information centres. Accordingly, owing to vast scope of collection development and management in University libraries researchers across the globe attempted to research not only the concept as a whole but the individual components of this collective process to intricate and highlight about various aspect associated with these components that are interconnected with each other. Since, each component in itself is a process that collectively helps to accomplish the goal of effective collection building in libraries. In this context, studies related to components of CD are, enumerated as under

- a) *Collection development policy (CDP)*
- b) *User needs assessment*
- c) *Selection*
- d) *Acquisition*
- e) *Evaluation of collection*
- f) *Weeding and*
- g) *Preservation of collection*

a) Collection Development Policies (CDP)

Fombad and Mutula (2003) observe that owing to immense importance of CDP, University libraries are increasingly becoming aware of the benefits of having a strong and constantly updated written collection development policy. In this milieu **Ahmed (2005); Kiondo (2004)** intricate about the concept CDP and discussed about their importance in academic libraries. Moreover, to ascertain the availability of CDP in University libraries **Gangadharaiah (2014); Joshi, Konnur and Shinde (2012); Somashekara, Mariswamy and Dhruvakumar (2014)** confirms the availability of CDP among Indian University libraries surveyed by them. Similar findings are resonated in the study conducted by **Gupta (2008)** confirming the availability of CDP in CSIR libraries whiles as **Ameyaw and Entsua-Mensah (2016)** in

University libraries of Ghana. Contrarily **Das (2015)** observes lack of CDP in all surveyed University libraries of Odisha while as **Kumar (2012)** highlights lack of CDP in University libraries of Kerala. Similar findings were resonated in the study of **Prakash and Patil (2013)** who observe lack of CDP in majority of central University libraries in India. Furthermore, **Chukwusa (2012); Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015)** reports the lack CDP in Nigerian University libraries. Furthermore, **Norman (1997)** reveals that half of the surveyed University libraries do not have any CDP at all. In line with same **Kiondo (2004)** confirms that with the exceptions of a few, majority of African University libraries lack comprehensive CDP's. Moreover, Ephraim (2001) in Mauritian University libraries and **Haider (1996)** in Pakistani University libraries also report lack of CDP. In tune with same **Kanwal (2006)** reveals that although almost all respondents were in favour of having a written policy but do not have well documented CDP. Accordingly, **Evans (2000)** emphasizes that to meet the varied information needs of user's libraries particularly University libraries shall have to go on with their dual collection development policies for print and electronic resources. Besides, **Singh (2004)** stresses the need for updating the overall *collection management policy* (CMP).

b) User's Need Assessment

It has been long established that fundamental aim of University libraries for which they exist is to satisfy the information needs of users. Owing to immense importance of users in libraries, **Curley, Broderick and Bonk (1985)** strongly emphasizes that librarians over the years have realized the importance of users, which persuaded them that an effective collection must be, developed with a firm perceptive of its users information needs. To support the fact **Maske (2012); Fombad and Mutula (2003)** state that the practicability of any collection can be determined by observing how robustly the library satisfies its patron intellectual needs. **Kachaluba, Brady and Critten (2013); Premchand-Mohammed (2011)** also stresses on patron-driven collection. In this milieu **Tahir, Mahmood and Shafique (2010)** reveal that it is very crucial for librarians predominantly in the scientific milieu to know about diverse need of users, users skills besides problems faced in identifying, accessing, utilizing various library resources. Accordingly, researchers draw attention towards the methods and means of assessing user's information needs. For instance, **Purdy (1942)** recommends, "*that the technique of evaluating the resources of a University library, in relation to real needs of patrons includes an analysis of the specific, day-to-day information needs of students and faculty and of the extent to which those needs are satisfied*". However, at the same time author highlights that evaluation in these terms requires facts pertaining to needs satisfied and needs not satisfied. In line with same **Allen (1994)** reports that it's useful to "evaluate circulation statistics, interlibrary loans requests, and

examine the size, depth, breadth and growth of the library's collection to assess the information needs of the users. **Haas (2000); Kasalu and Ojiambo (2012)** adds that it is also valuable to assess user's needs through analysis and user surveys. **Tenopir (2009)** observes that usage is an implicative measure about the value of the library collections and services. Moreover, **Lastres (2011)** reveals that to assess the usage of e-resources utilized by patron, *"librarians can take control of usage metrics with the help of new tools such as **Research Monitor, OneLog, and LookUp Precision.**"* Furthermore, **Parmeswaran (1997)** strongly emphasizes that libraries should have some inbuilt mechanism for assessing user requirements and evaluating the collections. In this regard, **Nisonger (1997)** rightly points out that evaluation criteria are needed to determine *"how well and how cost-effectively patron information needs are met"* as well as *"to assess how well the library-as a system that integrates both print and electronic resources-is responding to patron need."* Accordingly, it emerges that University libraries have initiated the practice of assessment in libraries for instance Lancaster University library regularly conducts user satisfaction surveys as a means of identifying areas for service improvement (**More success for the Library in student surveys, 2018**). In the same vein, Loughborough University Library focuses on the quality of customer care and information provided by the circulation desk, support services desk and enquiry desks (**Cunningham, Harrison, Walton, Parry & Young, 2015**). The Lingnan University Library also conducts annual user satisfaction surveys to assess their information needs (**Library User Satisfaction Survey, 2016**). **Khan (2009)** confirms practice of users need assessment in University libraries in U.P. Contrarily **Prakash and Patil (2013)** reveals that although Indian University libraries consider user needs for collection development however lacks periodic assessment of user needs. In the same vein **Shivalingaiah and Gowda (2012)**, reports that user surveys are not organized to know the status of the collection and services in libraries. Similar findings are resonated in the study conducted by **Khan (2015)** which reveals that users' needs assessment is an ignored area in the University libraries of Pakistan.

c) **Selection and Acquisition of Library Collection**

Commenting upon the importance of selection in collection development, **Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015)** opines that *selection* is a basic and foremost step in the acquisition process. In this context, **Evans and Saprano (2005)** investigate about selection of information resources in University libraries while as **Allison (1996)** highlights about the conventional selection criteria for print serials. In line with same **Ameen and Haider (2008)** elucidate the book selection strategies in University libraries and observe that with a few exceptions majority of libraries are still following the conventional selection practices. On the other hand

Benny (2015); Kumber and Hadagali (2005) discusses about the selection criteria, pricing issues and models for different electronic formats and enlist the challenges before library professionals in the changed environment while as selection of Web resources for academic libraries was discussed by **York (1996)**. In tune with same **Rowley (1998)** reports about the selection issues that must be, considered for an online search service. Besides, **Ameen and Haider (2008)** observe that majority of University libraries are following traditional selection practices. The author further states that faculty as well as librarians do not have a fair role in selection strategy. Conversely **Khan and Khan (2010); Khan and Bhatti (2016)** reveal that the selection of study materials in University libraries is done by librarians or recommended by teachers and students.

Moreover, commenting upon acquisition process **Kavulya (2004)** points out that it is the implementation of selection decision. In this milieu **Sasikala, Nagaratnamani and Dhanraju (2015)** critically examine the selection criteria and acquisition process in academic libraries in Andhra Pradesh to highlight the trends followed by these libraries reveals that purchase followed by gift, and donations are common methods of acquisition. **Ameen and Haider (2008); Haider (1996)** examine the selection and acquisition process in University libraries of Pakistan which apparently reveals that overall acquisition process is affected due to a no. of factors viz; lack of proper management, non-existence of acquisition policies, budgetary constraints and lack of competent expertise. Furthermore, **Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015)** examine the selection criteria and acquisition in Nigerian University libraries, which divulges purchase as the predominant method of acquisition in University libraries. **Ajidahun (2008)** intricate about book acquisition practices in Nigerian University libraries and highlights about the challenges associated with it.

d) Evaluation of Library Collection

Ameen (2008) observes that to complete the cycle of collection development, evaluation of its processes internally as well as externally is imperative in meeting users' expectation. In this milieu, commenting upon the techniques of assessing library collection, **Fombad and Mutula (2003)** state that, there are an array of methods for assessing and evaluating the quality of a collection viz; *“having it evaluated by a specialist in that field, the use of reading lists, bibliographic checking, numeric counts, formulas and standards, interlibrary loan analysis, checking against the catalogue of other libraries, implementation of user surveys, analysis of machine readable cataloguing data and the use of collection maps and Scat analysis”*. **Lancaster (1995)** put forward 3 main approaches to the evaluation of library collection which includes, *“1) Comparing parts of the collection against bibliographies of various types; 2) Comparing strengths of the collection in various subject areas with*

measures of community interests (e.g., student enrolment in courses); 3) Analyzing circulation records in an attempt to determine, from amount of use, whether or not present collection development policies seems appropriate.” On the other hand, in evaluating multimedia resources, **Lamb (2004)** identifies three methods viz; collection mapping, circulation statistics and patron survey. Moreover, **Pastine (1996)** also enumerated a number of methodologies in literature, which have received some acceptance and use in academic and research libraries viz; Quantitative methods and Qualitative methods. In this context, **Carrigan (1996); Danielson (2012)**, argues, “*For a balanced assessment of collection development and acquisitions evaluating both use and ILL statistics is indispensable.*” On the other hand, Andrews, Monday & Williams (2006, as cited in **Crowley and Spencer, 2011**) discussed about the *Tool JISC Academic Database Assessment (ADAT)* that is an online comparison tool, which facilitate libraries to make erudite decisions during the selection process in libraries. In line with same commenting upon the assessing the usage of e-resources **Crowley and Spencer (2011)** reveal that “*COUNTER-compliant reports give libraries the opportunity to consistently compare data across resources and vendors*” thereby aiding library’s decision-making processes when reviewing the renewal of large e-journal collections and other e-resources (**Bucknell, 2008**). On the other hand, **Hyodynmaa, Kannisto and Nurminen (2010)** highlights about collection mapping technique while as **Wiele, Hesselink and Iwaarden (2005)** provide an insight about the Mystery shopping method for evaluating the services quality in libraries.

In above context, **Hyodynmaa, Kannisto and Nurminen (2010); Khan (2009); Oseghale (2008)** confirms about the practice of assessing collection in University libraries using various evaluative techniques. Moreover, **Rayas Pacios and Lubisco (2008)** found that most Latin American University libraries evaluate some aspect of their services, but the frequency of these actions does not appear to be very consistent. Contrarily **Ameen (2010); Giri, Sen and Mahesh (2015); Khan and Bhatti (2015); Khan and Bhatti (2016)** observes that the culture of making a formal collection assessment has still not been introduced in the University libraries. However, some kind of formal or informal methods are used to get feedback, suggestions, or recommendations from the users.

e) **Weeding of Library Collection**

Commenting upon the significance of weeding the **Dubicki (2008)** points out that weeding of library collection must be, considered as an effective way of continuous quality improvement in library collection to meet patron’s intellectual needs. In this milieu, to highlight the status of weeding practice in University libraries, researchers carried out a no. of studies. For instance **Prakash and Patil (2013)** reveals that one third of the central library’s surveyed by

them follow weeding practice for less used documents, **Gangadharaiah (2014)** confirms weeding practice among University libraries of Andhra Pradesh; **Jyanthi (2013)** in Tamil Nadu while as **Johnston (2011)** in New Zealand. Contrarily **Das and choudhary (2014)** reports lack of weeding practice in the University libraries of Odisha; **Ephraim (2001)** in University libraries of Mauritius; **Konlan and Thompson (2015)** in University libraries of Ghana; **Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015)** in Nigeria while as **Kumar (2012)** highlights lack of weeding policy in Kerala University libraries.

f) Preservation of Library Collection

Commenting upon preservation practice in university libraries **Lui (1999)** explains that the methods of preservation are extensively implemented based upon the location, climate and environment. To highlight the status of preservation practices **Sawant (2014)** reveals lack of preservation culture among academic libraries of Mumbai which were attributed to the lack of proper preservation and conservation policies, lack of skilled professionals as well as lack of funds. Similar findings were resonated in the study conducted by **Ogunmodede and Ebijuwa (2013)** in African academic libraries and **Njeze (2012)** in Nigerian University libraries **Ovowoh and Iwhiwu (2010)** in Nigerian academic libraries. On the other hand, **Olatokun (2008)** reports that although University libraries in Nigeria have preservation policies but the methods and techniques of preservation and conservation were never implemented. On the other hand, **Adekannbi and Wahab (2015)** argue that academic libraries do implement certain methods of preservation and conservation but lack proper preservation policies.

Conclusion

The literature markedly makes it apparent that University libraries are striving to adapt with transformations to serve professionally to the user community of their parent institution thereby satisfying their information needs in every possible manner. Since, *“the major indicator of a good library is the quality and quantity of its collections”* (**Owolabi & Akintola, 2010**). However, at the same time literature vividly reveals about the shortcomings that are prevailing in the collection of University libraries of India and abroad. In this regard it is strongly observed that collection development practices followed by majority of University libraries particularly in the developing countries including India are still traditional. In the same vein, the literature also point towards the factors that results in ineffective collection development which includes; lack of CDP, flaws in selection and acquisition process, lack of user need assessment, lack of collection evaluation practices, lack of weeding and preservation practices etc. Yet, despite the fact certain studies are contradicting these findings by confirming about above mentioned practices being followed

by the University libraries indicating that University libraries are progressively adopting the transformations in order to satisfy the ever-changing information needs of user community in a best possible way.

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