

Professional Responsibility of Proper Collection Development in a Service Library

R. C. Gupta

Collection development initiates the selection activity. Selection of documents plays a vital role in advancing and achieving the goals of library service. Selection has two aspects viz., selection for new additions and selection for keeping worthwhile stocks and removing useless, out of service. Both the activities initiate a number of similar as well as divergent types of activities for a successful library service. The professionals involved in selection activities must have the courage and wit for selecting or rejecting a particular document, keeping in mind the constraints and balancing the demand and supply.

0. INTRODUCTION

Books or documents are the embodiments of human thoughts expressed with a view to communicate to the society for the purpose of utilisation and record. Library is a system having its organs : users, books and the staff, aims at collecting, organising and providing the worthwhile documents. Whereas the archives keep the documents for posterity, the service libraries keep their stocks up-to-date. The question of providing worthwhile documents to the user community confronts a number of decision making situations at various steps in all types of activities.

1. WHY SELECTION ?

Selection is a process of picking up those items which suit to one's specifications or requirements and reject those which do not match. The information explosion has caused the serious problem of abundance of books, periodicals, reports, special publications, etc. The number is increasing year after year. Every document so published is neither worthwhile nor useless. In addition, there are other factors, like limitations of building space, staff and budget for all such procurements. Moreover, it is neither required nor fully used by the users. Hence, a well defined selection policy is essential to be implemented.

R. C. Gupta, Scientist, Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee & Hony. Lecturer, Library Science Training Centre, Roorkee.

2. PROVISION PROCEDURE

The Second Law of library science demands that every user should get his or her desired reading material. It expects that the library should adopt a mechanism to analyse the demands of the users, to ascertain their nature : regular or casual and decide either of the two - resource sharing or selecting for purchase.

3. SELECTION

The Third Law 'Every book its reader' and the Fifth Law 'Library is a growing organism' jointly expect not to select any such document that has no regular readership and if by any chance such documents which are not being used for a considerable time and readership could not be cultivated for those, should be withdrawn from the stocks. Selection activities may thus be grouped in two categories :

3.1 For New Documents to be Purchased

- Providing the users with news, reviews, publishers' announcements and other details concerning new publications.
- Initiate them to study, assess and decide the suitability for getting document purchased.
- Inviting indents from the users at all levels and categories.
- Approval through various channels, sanction, etc.
- Placing order, reminders for delay in supply, etc.
- Receipt, verification, accessioning, passing the bill for payment.
- Technical processing, classification and cataloguing, filing of multiple cards.
- Display, preparation for shelving, shelving.
- Circulation, maintenance, dusting, repairs, etc.
- Reference Services like — current awareness service, bibliographic abstracting, indexing, retrieval, translation and reproduction.
- Resource Sharing — Inter library lending or borrowing.
- Use study for evaluation and improvement; Librametric.
- Feedback implementation.

3.2 For Old Documents to be Retained

- Finding out which documents have not been used within say last

five years or so and finding out the reasons for that. Ascertaining whether such documents have gone obsolete, or the trend or need has changed.

Picking out and keeping those documents in a separate collection (apart from active collection) and watching for their probable use, if any.

Notifying the list to all users as well as local libraries, etc.

Updating the catalogue and the shelf list.

Revising the reference tools, databases and other pertinent records.

Remaining activities are the same as in 3.1 above after technical processing.

4. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The success of the library services depends completely on the policies, procedures and their implementation. The person behind the decision and implementation plays an important role that leads to achieving or not achieving the goal. A few of the expectations may be detailed as under :

4.1 Assessment of the Users

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choice - Level of understanding - Present need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recreational - research - casual - regular | <p>In the context of social, economical and national priorities.</p> |
|---|--|

4.2 Assessment of the Document

- Primary Knowledge
 - stimulator
 - illuminator
 - teacher
 - challenger or developer of assumptions
 - research aid
- Secondary
 - aspector : philosophy, sociology or economical aspects
 - marginal : dealing with related fields of study
- Base
 - classics, monumental work

- fundamentals, foundation
- reference documents

4.3 Assessment of Availability Position

4.4 Assessment of Constraints

- Budget
- Space, furniture, etc.
- Staff to work

4.5 Assessment of the Need for Duplication

- Actual need
- Circulation time
- Queue in reservation
- Tolerance for waiting

4.6 Assessment of Resource Sharing Capabilities, Availability and Sharing Relations

4.7 System Evaluation

4.8 Implementation

5. CONCLUSION

The motto : serve worthwhile, calls for select worthwhile and keep worthwhile. The activities detailed here and the suggested course are only illustrative and can be practised with tact of the person concerned. Rejection invites a number of questions and bitterness but for the sake of good service, it is necessary. The selection activities must be done regularly to enable other activities to be done regularly.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The paper is published with the kind permission of the Director, Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee.

REFERENCES

1. MCCLEALLAN (AW). Decision problems in book selection. *In* March of Library Science - Kaula Festschrift, 1979, Vikas, New Delhi, 1979, P. 283-301.
2. RANGANATHAN (SR). Library book selection, 1966, Asia.