



Procurement Of Documents In Special Libraries: A Study

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Abstract

Special libraries are intended to serve the need of a portion of the community with special interest and requiring detailed information respecting a limited subject field. So, it is needed to accomplish a great responsibility for suitable document procurement policy in special libraries. There are some methods followed for an acquisition system. This article will discuss how documents are acquired in special libraries, the budget procedures followed, economic resources for purchasing library materials, library staff conditions etc. This study has taken references of collection development system of some special libraries of Kolkata to discuss the difference of collection development system of different libraries.

Keywords: Special library, Acquisition, Documents

Introduction

In the 20th century with the development of industrial, technological and scientific areas the concept of special library came into existence. The increasing need of the clientele for specialised information for further development and research has to play a vital role to the expansion of the special type of libraries.

1. What is special library?

- Special library is defined as by ALA (American Library association) as “a library established, supported and administered by a business firm, private corporation, association, government agency, or other special interest group or agency to meet the information needs of its members or staff in pursuing the goals of the organisation. Scope of collections and services is limited to the subject interest of the host or parent organisation.” (Gupta, n.d.)
- Dr. S. R. Ranganathan defined the activities of special library as to supply detailed information in respect of some limited subject field. According to him “the difference between general library and a special library lay in the nature of the clientele and the material or the documents served.” (Dhiman , 2008)
- UNESCO general conference views special libraries as institutions whose collections and services were to provide the information needs of their primary users in business and industrial enterprises, government, professional associations and learned societies and other organized groups. (Dhiman, 2008)

It can be said that a special library collects updated and comprehensive information, on the subject concerned with the parent organization and disseminate this information of special relevance to the people associated with the organization on demand and in anticipation.

1.1 Classification of special libraries

The categorisation of special libraries has been denoted according to their organizational structure, purposes of function, level of support and size. So, it is difficult to generalize and identify any specific nature of special libraries. Special libraries may include collections devoted to materials on a single subject or related groups of subjects (art libraries, business libraries, law and medical libraries); others may be distinguished by the form of materials collected (map libraries, picture libraries etc.); Some can be classified according to their parent organizations (Museum libraries, Government Libraries). Special libraries have been set up under the aegis of either private or government organisation.

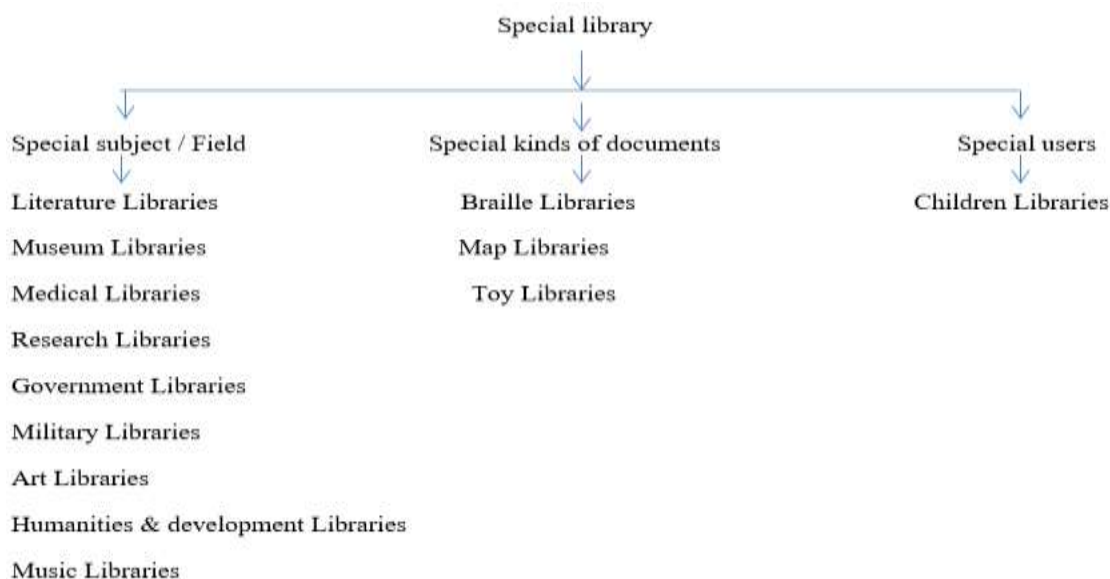


Figure 1

1.2 Methods of documents' procurement

“ The process of selecting, ordering and receiving materials for library or archival collections by purchase, exchange or gift which may include budgeting and negotiating with outside agencies such as publishers, dealers and vendors to obtain resources to meet the need of the institutions clientele in the most economical and expeditious manner. (Prytherch, 2000)

Actually the procurement involves the accumulation of some procedures. It includes budgeting and dealing with outside agencies , document selection and acquiring in library.

1.3 Types of library documents

In AACR2R documents are divided in the following ways :

- ❖ Books, pamphlets , printed sheets
- ❖ Cartographic materials
- ❖ Manuscripts
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Sound recordings
- ❖ Motion pictures and video recordings
- ❖ Graphic materials
- ❖ Computer files
- ❖ Three-dimensional artifacts and realia
- ❖ Microforms
- ❖ Serials

According to Denis Grogan the sources of documents are three types:

1. **Primary** : Periodicals, research reports, conference proceedings, patents, standards, trade literature, theses
2. **Secondary** : Indexing and abstracting , Review of progress, Reference books
3. **Tertiary** : Yearbooks, directories, bibliographies, guide to literatures etc.

Dr. S. R. Ranganathan categorised documentary sources as follows :

1. **Conventional** : Books, Periodicals , Maps, Atlases etc.
2. **Non-conventional**: Micro copy, Visual audio, Audio-Visual etc.
3. **Meta-document** : Direct record unmediated by human mind.

According to C.W.Hanson document format or documentary sources can be divided according to media: **1.Primary**
2.Secondary **3.Tertiary**

So, we can arrange documentary sources as follows:

DOCUMENTARY SOURCES/DOCUMENT FORMATS					
Written / printed			Electronic		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Audio	Visual	Audio-Visual
Scholarly journal articles	Bibliography	Yearbooks	Disc	video	Video cassette
Thesis	Abstracting journal	Bibliography Of Bibliographies	Audio clips	Micro film	Multimedia
Newspaper	Indexing journal	Research In Progress	Mobiles	Three Dimensional Artifact	Hypertext
Conference Proceedings	Reference Books	Almanac	Recordings	CD	Slide show
Standards	Text books	Fact book	Radio broadcasts	Micro fiche	Films
Patent	News Digest	Directories	Audio CD	6.DVD	Animations
Manuscript	Biographies	Handbooks			
Government publications	Literary criticism	Manuals			
Speeches	Reviews	Guide books			
Diaries	Commentaries	Dictionaries			
Interviews					
Speeches					
Autobiographies					
Letters					

Figure 2

2. Mode of Documents Procurement in special libraries

In a special library specific kind of documents are required by its clientele. Donald Davidson commented “ in most types of special library- especially those of commercial, profit-making organizations –the principal function of the library staff is to provide a depth of personal service to users which will save their time and energies for their real working functions as, say, engineers, marketing executives, salesman or scientists.” The core of a library is its collection. To enhance the quality of a library treasure a suitable procurement policy plays the pivotal role. Collection development serves the foundation of library system. We can represent the procurement process as follows:

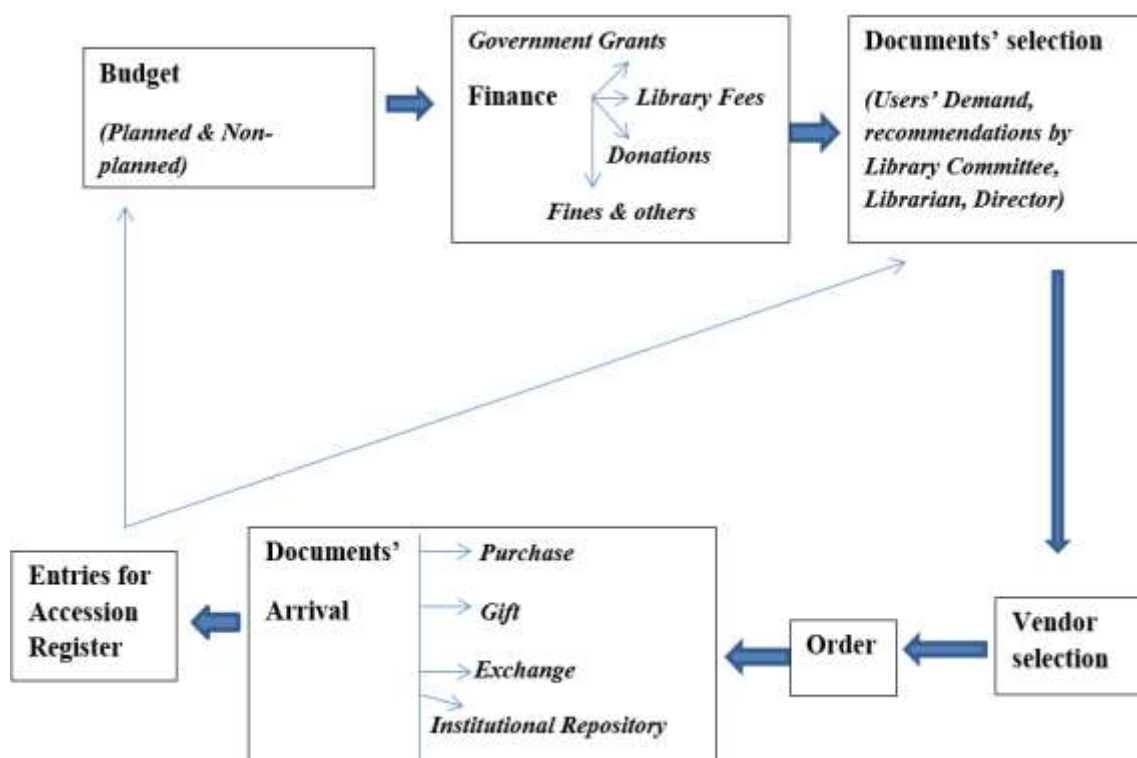


Figure 3

2.1. Costs and Budget

Special libraries are facing constant financial scrutiny. There are different viewpoints of scholars regarding the role of librarians in budget planning. Savord's opinion is that to carry out budgeting effectively librarians therefore need training in financial management and good accounting skills and "...if the rules of the organization would permit, it would be well for every special library to be given a definite budget on which to work." (Savord, 1937). Many librarians in smaller specialized libraries have to work with limited and diminishing resources, very often because the importance of the service is not fully understood by the funding body." (Cropley, 1989). Jacqueline Cropley suggested that with help from the accounts department the librarian should investigate cost analysis and value assessment and pursue thorough effective constant revision of the budget, record keeping and data capture. An operating budget will give the library a much better standing in the organization and the librarian a greater feeling of responsibility for the expenses incurred. It seems quite applicable in the field of special libraries and their relation to budgeting.

Financial management of a library plays a significant role to build up the library's economic foundation. Financial support that is given to the library may be categorized into two types: Recurring and Non-recurring. Recurring expenses include the purchase of books, journals, maintenance of regular services and other contingent expenditure. Non-recurring grants are given for specific purposes, like construction of buildings, purchase of furniture and sometimes for special collections. Sometimes ad hoc grants are recommended for special purchases.

Libraries follow mainly the process of 'planned budget'. Generally libraries mention the budget in their annual report as plan and non-plan budget. But in the other point of view, Planning Programming Budget method- specifies the sector of amount distribution- is followed in some libraries, like Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Indian Museum, National Institute of Orthopedically Handicapped etc. adhere to this method. On the other hand Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Victoria Memorial Hall allot a lump sum amount as a whole requirement for library. The total yearly budget of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science is about 5 crore.

2.2 Finance

Financial sources of special libraries are mainly collected from Government. The Asiatic Society, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad receives Government-in-aid grants. Generally libraries are financed through these methods: **1. Government Grants 2. Library Fees 3. Donations 4. Fines.** Besides some special libraries like the Asiatic Society earn also from reprography except government grants and library fines. The Bangiya Sahitya Parishad receives government grants around Rs.25000 per year. Corporate libraries receive grants from their company. Though special libraries are received grants from government but most of the cases it is not sufficient. In that case the lack of economic shortage is making up through library fines and fees, reprography etc. Again a map library National Atlas & Thematic Mapping Organisation, Kolkata (N.A.T.M.O.) gets financial assistance from government. Besides, N.A.T.M.O. earns revenue about Rs.3 lakhs (2019-20) by selling maps, atlases, monographs from sales counters of Kolkata headquarters, exhibition stalls etc. that benefits library's financial resources. Revenue generated from exhibitions and fairs is around Rs.1,62,270 (2019-20). NATMO also earns from course fees for providing training on different courses. The Asiatic Society earned from reprography service Rs.8088.00 in the year 2021-22 whereas Rs.37583.00 was received in the year 2022-23.

2.3 Documents' Selection

2.3.1 Factors

After budget preparing documents selection process for purchase has to be started. Some factors are responsible to determine the items to be purchased. The most crucial factor is obviously the price of documents. Then in special libraries subject is the next important factor. There are some differences in the process of selecting documents between different types of special libraries. For instance, Birla Academy of Art and Culture Library, Manmatha Roy Granthagar (Paschim Banga Natya Akademi) are the art libraries and definitely give priorities on the 'subject' of the document to select for purchase. A corporate library like, Tata Consultancy Services, a film library, for example Ritwik Memorial Library (Nandan), Military library - that is Fort William's library all of these libraries have been needed subject based document selection. Different types of documents are required in National Atlas & Thematic Mapping Organisation's library, that is rich with 65000 maps and topographical sheets besides books and journals. Judge's Library of Kolkata High Court (Law library) purchases books regarding laws. They had subscribed Manupatra online and full set of Halsbury's Laws of England (5th edition) in 2022-23. The matter may be different in the case of music libraries where 'Music Guru's (teachers) recommendations get more preference. Besides, users' demand, publishers' reputation, authors' reputation, are the other factors.

2.3.2 Sources

The most conventional method to choose the documents is the approval by scholars and authority. Besides publishers' catalogue is one of the preferable way. As a literature library Bangiya Sahitya Parishad gives priority on book reviews to get an idea about a specific book. Corporate library like T.C.S. does not require any traditional method of data collection. They rely on consulting on line book stores and database. Sometimes exhibitions become also an important source of document selection. Again in the Asiatic Society (Humanities and Development Library) utilizing catalogues of different publishing houses book selection procedure is done by the members, staff and research scholars. Besides subject bibliographies, book seller's list also give relevant information for book selection. Some research libraries follow approval method as well as online method to be aware of current research. Actually there is no specific process. More than one method is followed.

2.3.3 Authorities for selection

Though librarians' opinions according to users' demand are accepted, in the most of the libraries library committee takes the final decision. In literature library like Bangiya Sahitya Parishad library committee has crucial role for book selection. In some libraries directors are all in all. Again in ITC Research Sangeet Academy though directors confirm final decision what books will be purchased most of the recommendations come from 'Sangeet Gurus' (teacher). In high court library head of the Bar Council recommends to purchase though there is a library committee. In the government Library like, West Bengal Legislative Library the preference are given for Parliamentary and constitutional interest and the selection is made by the secretary on the approval of the Library committee.

2.3.4 Procedure for selection

Before finalise the list for purchasing documents scanning or scrutiny is done. In research libraries indent passing method is followed before scrutiny. Generally in corporate library as the authority is the decision maker formal sanction is obtained from the authority.

2.4 Vendor Selection

After the selection of documents – journals, books and other materials - the next stage is the partnerships or vendor selection for document purchase. A survey of the selected library materials and cataloguing agents introduces new partnerships among vendors and libraries, leading to greater opportunities for acquisitions, cataloguing and collection development. Libraries can depend on vendors for pre order searching, verification and claiming functions as well as copy and original cataloguing. (Bush, 1994). Negotiations can have a significant impact on the cost and delivery of library materials. A good collaboration between vendors and libraries can make an understanding of discount or other traditional factors that help to shrink the library budgets. In determining a special library's vendor selection sometimes questionnaire was sent to librarians to survey their vendor selection criteria and methods.

The procedures of selecting vendors are enquiry or tender method, quotation, direct order, or standing vendor etc. Generally direct order is given. For purchasing computers, furniture tender is given to potential suppliers. For documents purchasing quotation method is followed.

Selection of suppliers depends on some factors : Experience, Credibility, Financial ability, Discount, Materials coverage etc. Generally experience and credibility are considered as primary criteria. Discount is less important factor once the supplier is confirmed as reliable. Then regular communications with vendors are maintained. But sometimes negotiation through agents is also preferred.

2.5 Order

After selection of documents and confirmation of vendors the orders are sent to vendors or agents. But this depends also on the publishers whether they will deal through agents or not. American Library Association does not prefer agents to get orders (Ray,1926). Frances K.Ray proposed the procedure of ordering in a medical library. Generally foreign and domestic subscriptions are acquired through separate agents. With the wide variety of vendor services available, discount or other traditional factors may no longer play a vital role in library's vendor selection. According to Linda A. Brown the actual order is usually placed as an order letter or by fax. Selecting and ordering these documents through electronic media 'has to break new ground' and so, orders are often placed electronically by email or directly with the provider on his home page. (Ball,2000).

In any special library, like research library where library management software is used (e.g. libsys) , order files are maintained using reports provided by that software. It then interacts and places orders for these documents with around suppliers who are local as well as outsiders. The evaluation of the performance of acquisition section and on the other hand , the assessment of different suppliers by the acquisition department is necessary.(Mandal,2000). Though M.S.Sridhar suggested for special libraries various types of vendor-controlled order plan with their merits and demerits in practical specific orders are given in the most cases. But some libraries give pre-paid orders for journals. Actually no single procedure is followed, combination of methods are followed as requirements.

2.6 Documents' Arrival

There are several methods for documents collected in libraries, the most common are :

- 2.6.1 **Purchase** : It is the primary method of acquiring documents in the library by directly purchasing from the publishers or agents .
- 2.6.2 **Donation** : It is an welcome addition of collections of a library through specimen copy of book by publishers or gifts from any personnel.
- 2.6.3 **Institutional membership** : From the membership of several scientific societies and intuitions the library acquires the right to receive the materials and resources published by the institutions that are affiliated.
- 2.6.4 **Deposit system** : It entitles for a specially designated library, receive free copies of documents published by government , national and international organisations and other types.

2.6.5 **Exchange:** The exchange of materials between libraries, scientific societies, institutions, governments serves the following purposes :

- Acquisition of rare and out-of-print books that cannot be obtained from any other source.
- Acquisition of publications that aren't for sale or not eligible for distribution in the usual book trade channels, which usually occurs in the case of domestic and foreign government documents and reports.
- Obtaining government publications regularly.
- Exchange procedure constitutes a valuable resource to fill gaps in the collection of a library. The exchange method also promotes collaborative cooperation between libraries especially at the national level.

It has very little difference between the procedures of documents' different types of special libraries . Though the common methods are purchase and receiving gifts there is a difference between types of documents exchanged through institutional membership. Special libraries generally have membership of IASLIC. Victoria Memorial Hall Library has institutional membership with Indian Museum. Indian Museum Library has the institutional membership with the Asiatic Society Library, Archaeological Survey of India .Indian Association for Cultivation of Science shares resources with Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics .The Asiatic Society receives documents as gifts from the Government. Bangiya Sahitya Parishad receives gifts. Actually all libraries exchange documents with the same category libraries. Research libraries are collaborated through consortia.

2.7 Accession Register

After arrival in the library, the documents' acquisition procedure - classification, cataloguing, entering in accession register - will be completed. Then either the next book selection process will be started according to users' demand or recommendations or it will be waiting till the next budget will be produced.

Conclusion

The distinctive nature of the treasure of each special library makes it indispensable to maintain a different procurement system for each library.

1) With the traditional procurement method for printed documents, in this digital era most of the libraries use digitized procurement procedure also. Software are installed like Libsys , Koha. Through software budget prepare, communication with vendors and creating purchase order – everything can be completed. Bangiya Sahitya Parishad uses Koha software. And most of the libraries use Libsys10 software.

2) Subscription agreements with e-publishers, like Elsevier, Springer etc may also be considered as procurement in libraries. Apart from traditional printed materials, CD/DVD-ROM, microfilm and microfiche are also another types of documents procured by the library. The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science's library serves its clientele through various databases- Science Direct, Springer Link, SciFinder , SCOPUS, Web of Science and INSPEC for bibliographic information, author abstracts. The National portal and digital Repository for Indian Museums are developed and hosted by C-DAC, Human – Centered Design & Computing Group. HCDC Group has developed JATAN : Virtual Museum software which is used for creating the digital collections in various museums. Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics provides on line access to journals with Libsys10 software to access the library databases. Again the legislative library of West Bengal follows some traditional method of procurement and uses WINISIS /ISIS software.

3. It can be said that not only books' or journals' procurement but also digitization of rare documents - like manuscripts, old collections - are also an addition in the collections. Sometimes through reprography rare or old books are recovered. The Asiatic Society revamped and uploaded manuscripts, microfiche collections, books in the internal server of the society. As a part of library automation 1636 volumes of books have been uploaded and 1551 volumes have been updated in Libsys10 software. The manuscripts are digitized by scanning. After reprography or scanning, old documents added as new documents. So, it can be said that scanning, reprography are the means of procurement in today's libraries. There are some limitations in special libraries regarding lack of staff, freedom of librarians, modern procurement policy. But it must be said that with the advent of digital age a drastic change has been occurred in the technologies and services of each type of libraries. Special libraries are also receiving the benefits of the digital age. So, we can say it one kind of digital procurement method.

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