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Ghalib Khan Dr.

Department of Library & Information Science, Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak,
ghalibkhan1@yahoo.com

Rubina Bhatti Dr.

Department of Library & Information Science Islamia University Bahawalpur, dr.rubytariq@gmail.com

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An Argument on Collection Development and Collection Management

Dr. Ghalib Khan
Dr. Rubina Bhatti

Abstract

This study is an attempt to examine the concepts of collection development and collection management through extensive literature review. Though these phrases are being used interchangeable but there is hardly any consensus on which term is more comprehensive. Are these terms the same or different? Some authors see them synonyms and other the expansion and extension of one another. The evolutionary studies of collection development and collection management show that these two are overlapping terms in nature, however, the two areas together are difficult to define. This study is an effort to present an argument on these terms in a bifurcated way based on literature review.

Keywords: Collection Development, Collection Management

The Collection Development

Collection development is considered an essential element of the information life cycle. It is the most significant processes in the effective performance of any unit of information (Vignau & Meneses, 2005). Adams and Noel (2008) describe collection development as the most important factor for library quality and among the most expensive aspects of library operations. Reitz (2013) states that “collection development is the process of planning and acquiring a balanced collection of library materials over a period of years, based on an on-going assessment of the information needs of the library’s clientele, analysis of usage statistics and demographic projection”. Feather & Sturges (2003) see it as “the process of planning a library’s program for acquisitions and disposals, focusing on the building of collections in the context of the institution’s collection management policy”. According to Evans & Saponaro (2005) collection development is “the process of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of a library’s materials collection in terms of patron needs, community resources, and attempting to correct existing weaknesses if any”.

A common factor in these definitions is “the needs of the users” for which the collection is developed. This factor appears to be a distinct element for collection development which differentiates collection development from “selection” and “acquisition” which until now was considered the genesis of the information cycle (Vignau and Meneses, 2005).

Collection development is a universal process for libraries and information centres. The process of collection development comprises six major components, community analysis, selection policies, selection, acquisition, deselection, and evaluation (Evans & Zarnosky, 2004, Evans & Saponaro, 2005). Graph 1 illustrates these six components in graphical form.

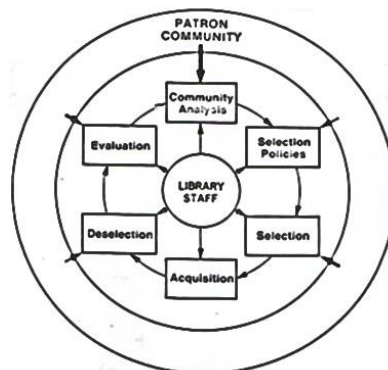


Figure 2.3: Collection Development Process (Evans & Zarnosky, 2004, Evans & Saponaro, 2005).

In terms of functional aspects, various researchers have described collection development process in different ways, depending upon their environment. However, the review of literature show, that Evans model of collection development has been a prototype design for all. Most of researchers and experts have mounted their postulates and descriptions of collection development process on his modal. To mention few are;

Kasalu and Ojiambo (2012) describe collection development as the process of analysing users' needs, establishing a collection development policy framework, selection, acquisition, collection evaluation and de-selection. According to Johnson (2018) collection development process includes, selecting materials, collection development policy, collection maintenance, budget, users' needs assessment, collection assessment. She also includes cooperation and resource sharing in the process of collection development. Gessesse (2000) states, the process of collection development includes, planning, goal-setting, decision making, budgeting, acquisition of materials, and collection evaluation. Van Zijl (2005) notes community analysis, developing collection development, policies, critical selection, format selection, acquisition, collection analysis and evaluation, weeding and evaluation of the external infrastructure for resource sharing, the crucial elements of collection development process.

All these statements and illustrations show resemblance with Evans modal in one way or other. Most of them are the commentary form of his modal or the expansion of his statements.

To the elements, Evans believes to be central to collection development, Gorman & Miller (2001) add "policy issues" Moskowitz (1984) adds "budgeting" and "allocating" as the important elements of collection development. Moskowitz further suggests that systematic building of a library collection must be based on meaningful data rather than subjective choice or chance. Horward (2009) suggests continued examination of the collection for the purpose to determine and support new areas of research.

The recent advancement in the ICT, use of web technologies and electronic resources has brought about a revolutionary change in the library's landscape. It has affected the selection and acquisition process of collection development. Collections are changing relentlessly from print to digital and electronic format. Therefore, this change presupposes that electronic resources must also be included in the collection development process.

Taking all the above into consideration, collection development is the polices, standards and guidelines whereby information resources (traditional or digital) are selected and acquired with the view to developing a balanced, easily accessible collection of information material which will meet the information needs of all users of that collection. The following are the crucial elements of the collection development process: community analysis, developing collection developing polices critical selection, format selection, acquisition, acquisition, collection analysis and evaluation, weeding and evaluation of the eternal infrastructure for resources sharing (Van Zijl, 2005).

The Collection Management

Collection management was proposed as a concept in the 1980s. It was used as an umbrella term subsuming collection development in its structure. According to this construct,

collection management includes collection development and an expanded suite of decisions (Johnson, 2018). Since 2001, collection management has become a professional discipline in archives and libraries (Poole, 2009). Collection management, although closely linked to collection development, is seen by Atkinson (1998) as an expansion of collection development. He too calls it “an umbrella term under which collection development is subsumed”.

Gorman and Miller (1997) while studying the evolution of collection development to collection management also found that due to the overlapping nature, the two areas together are difficult to define. In terms of functional aspects, collection management has been described by various authors. According to Poole (2009) collection management involves a wide range of inter related activities including: Collections development (acquisition, disposal, loan or transfer) Risk management (conservation, security, environmental control) Stock management (documentation, cataloguing, digitisation) Access management (interpretation, rights management, knowledge) Legal Compliance (evidence of ownership, good governance). Kennedy (2006) refers collection management to “the set of interrelated activities involved in building and maintaining a collection of library resources to serve the needs and wants of its clients”. Atkinson (1998) calls it the process of making collections available to users.

Rapid developments in ICT have brought an enormous transformation in the traditional form of libraries and their collections, transforming the services, users’ expectation and staff responsibilities. Expansions in the higher education sector, scholarships and library collections have greatly influenced the evolution of collection management (Branin, Groen & Thorin, 2000). Various definitions of collection management depict its breadth, width and depth available in the literature. Feather and Sturges, (2003) comprehensively elaborate the nature of collection management as follows:

“Collection management is a broad term that has replaced the narrower ‘collection building’ and ‘collection development’ of former decades. In its present manifestation collection management includes: Planning and funding, collection development, book selection, acquisitions, provision of access, use, maintenance, evaluation, preservation, and weeding”.

The literature shows that there is some diversity in what authors believe to be included in the process of collection management. Common to most are housing, preserving and storage of information resources. Van Zilj (2005) added fiscal management and technological support for digital and electronic resources to the process of collection management. Kennedy (2006) included selection, acquisition, collection evaluation and de-selection to the tasks of collection management. Jenkins and Morley (1999) included selection, acquisition and weeding in the concept of collection management. Law (1999) lists as part of the collection management: “the allocation of book fund and the balance between books, journals and conservation, the disposition of stock and closed access, the decision to acquire access to electronic resources and other media through purchase or lease; location decisions as between branches of the library and stores; and the monitoring and encouragement of collection use”. Gorman and Miller (1997) add to the tasks performed in collection management those of binding, monitoring collections, staffing, systems development, networking, new technology and resource sharing.

Van Zilj (2005) is of the opinion that management of budgets, technological aspects of collection management and of making collections easily available to users have to do more with adding value to collections and therefore form part of collection management. Keeping in view

this point to fore she describes collection management as “the process whereby value is added to collection of library materials by ensuring that required information resources in the most appropriate format are easily and speedily accessible to those who require them”.

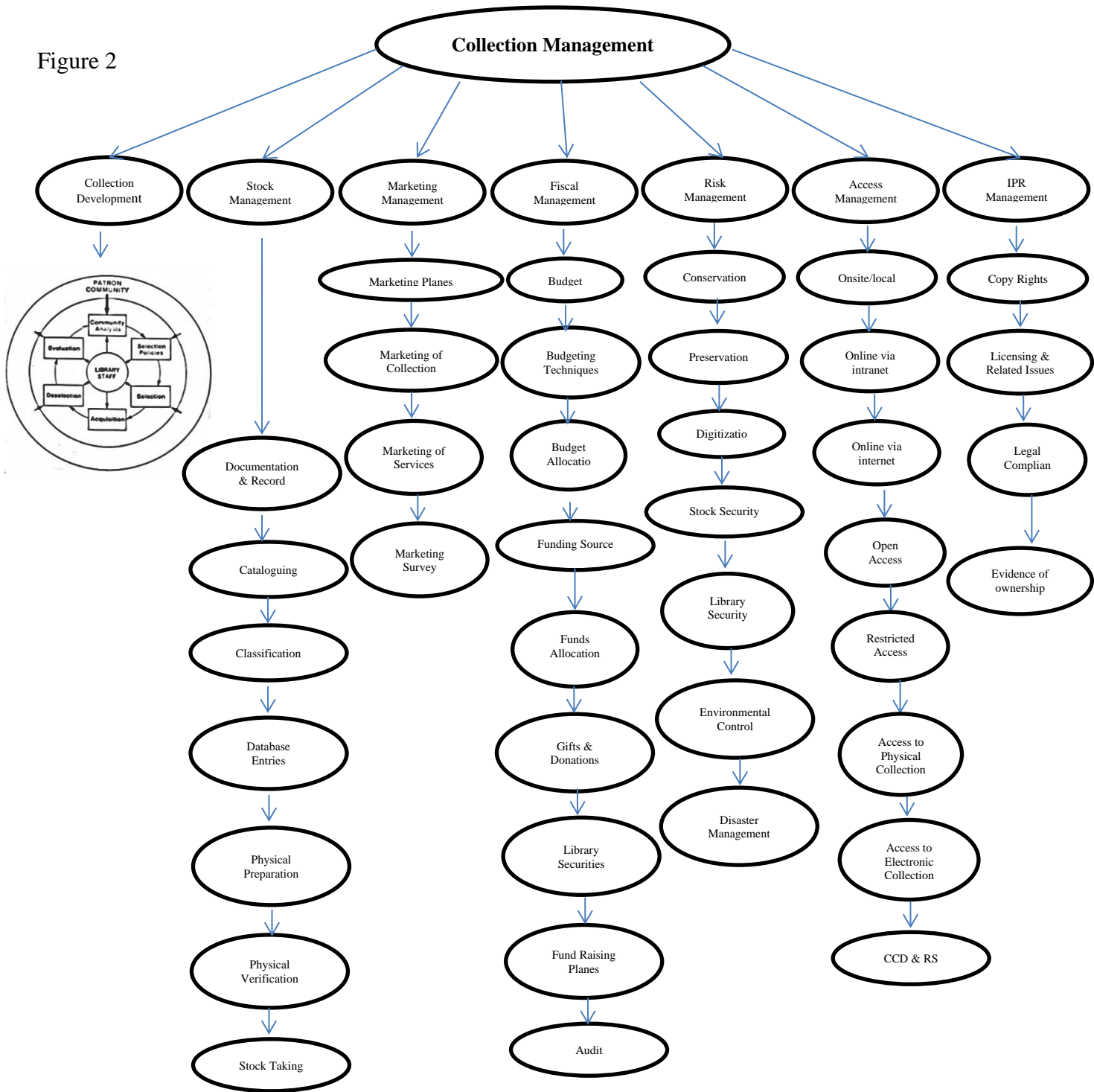
This description covers traditional, digital, and electronic resources. Collection managers must see to the processing, convenient housing and preservation of information resources as well as the storage thereof in a safe and convenient facility. Since, the concept of adding value is central to the process of collection management therefore adequate classification and cataloguing also form a part of it.

The review of literature shows that collection management has always been more difficult to define. It is a term which “means different things to different people”. There is a wide range of definitions provided by different authors in the literature (Johnson, 2018; Poole, 2009; Van Zilj, 2005; Kennedy 2006; Feather and Sturges, 2003; Law, 1999; Jenkins and Morley, 1999; Gorman and Miller, 1997).

Current shifts in the field of librarianship and information technology has made collection management more apparent. Due to this factor, according to Gorman and Miller (1997) collection management has become more complex and multifaceted. The growth of Internet, greater reliance on document delivery and resource sharing, and changes in scholarly communication, rapid shifting driven in parts by information technology and in parts by economic factors, further mean that any definition established today will be different tomorrow. Nevertheless, within this changing environment there are emerging issues that, because of their broad focus, are likely to remain significant as we move from one century to the next.

Based on literature review various activities of collection management have been presented in the following figure (2). According to this presentation “Collection Management” is an umbrella term which involves a wide range of interrelated activities, including: Collection Development (Community analysis, Selection policies, Selection, Acquisition, De-selection, and Collection evaluation), Stock Management (Stock documentation and its record maintenance, Cataloguing, Classification, database record management of collection, Physically preparing collection for display in the library for users, Physical verification of collection and stock taking), Marketing Management (Planes for collection promotion, marketing of collection to the users, marketing of different library services, and conducting marketing surveys), Fiscal Management (library budget, application of different budgeting techniques, budget allocation for various items, funding bodies, various funding sources, allocating funds for various library activities, management of gifts and donations, managing library securities deposited by the users, fund raising planes, and auditing the whole fiscal management), Risk Management (conservation of documents, preservation of materials, digitization of collection, stock security measurements, library building security measures, environmental control initiatives, and planes for disaster management in case of calamities), Access Management (onsite access to documents in the library, online access via intranet in the university premises/on campus access only, online access via internet, open access to documents, restricted to the designated users’ community only, access to physical and e-resources and cooperative collection development and resources sharing programs), Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Management (handling issues of copy rights and licensing, legal compliance of IPR in case of physical and electronic collection and evidence of ownership of collection, both for physical and electronic collection).

Figure 2



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