



ROLE OF COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN ACADEMIC LAW LIBRARIES

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Abstract

This collection statement expresses the current needs of the academic law community. Because academic programs grow and change, the statement will be periodically reviewed and revised, if necessary, to meet current and future needs. Changes in specific segments may be a continuing process, but a formal review of the entire statement will be done at regular intervals. The aim of the collection development policy is to provide a framework for the maintenance and development of the academic law library's collections, to indicate priorities, to establish selection criteria across the range of different subjects, languages and to create a reliable and logical basis of future development of the collections. This article discusses the role of collection development in academic law libraries and primary function of the library is to support the curricular, and research needs of the students and faculty. The purpose of an acquisition policy is to provide for structured development of library collection in accordance with defined goals and selection measures.

Keywords: 1. Importance of Law Library Collection Development
2. Law Library Acquisitions 3. Selection and Acquisition



Introduction

Library as a social institution and reservoir of public knowledge, expects the users to be more disciplined and conscious of their responsibility in exercising due care in using and handling documents. It is the responsibility of the library to provide required information support to genuine and serious readers, and at the same time, it is its duty to protect its property for future generations.¹ Library as a social institution is of ancient age. Initially charged to preserve communal memory of the society it has gone on to perform many cultural roles libraries are indispensable to society for peace and progress.² The progress and prosperity of a society largely depends on the total wealth of knowledge it has and the extent of its use. Libraries are reservoirs of accumulated knowledge of the past and the present. Knowledge is power. It enriches our intellectual capabilities, improvises our efficiency in performing our professional as well as personal tasks and increases our decisions making capacity. Library is considered as an essential component in the educational system, particularly in higher education, because teaching, learning in advanced subjects and research work in specialized areas depend on the strength of documentary sources of the library.³

The mission of the Law Library is to support legal scholarship and education by providing outstanding and innovative information services and resources to the Law colleges, University, and the worldwide research community. Law Library is designed to meet the research needs of the law college's and university's students, satisfy the demands of the Law College and Universities curriculum, and facilitate the education of its students. It also supports the teaching, research, and service



interests of the faculty, and serves the colleges and Universities special teaching, research, and service objectives.

A law library is a collection of books or other written or printed materials, including manuscripts and pamphlets, posters, photographs, motion pictures, and videotapes, sound recordings, and computer databases. A library also refers to the faculty in which they are housed and the institution that is responsible for their maintenance. Collection development one if the intellectual under printing of library service, has become a reactive function in most libraries. Traditional theories of collection development dictated the need to know the user community and to bury the collection methodically, according to the long – and short – term need of the library users.

Collection Development

The collection development is designed as a guide to the collection philosophy of the library and as a blueprint for the preservation and future direction of library collection, consistent with the mission of the library.⁴ Library collection development is an art not a science, from past experience and knowledge of the interest of the library's users. It is possible to know with some certainty may of the resources they will need. But the needs and interests of the community are constantly changing with new faculty, new course offerings and the development of new subjects areas. The library's collection development policy grows out of the library's mission.⁵ The purpose of the collection development policy is to provide general principles and guidelines under which the process of selecting and acquiring materials will proceed. It is useful in both in providing consistency among those who have



responsibility for developing the collection, and in communicating the library's policies to faculty, student and other library users.

The collection has traditionally been the heart of the library. Even at a time when access might be as important as selecting and owning materials, each library must continue to provide a core collection to meet most user needs. Academic law libraries face a particularly different time. The growth of increasingly specialized academic law disciplines, the dramatic increase in cost for serial publications, new resource sharing initiatives, and increased user expectations have all made collection development and management more difficult.⁶

Basic Resources of Library

Up- to-date general materials which will aid readers' immediate understanding of subject and will serve to introduce readers to the subject and to other sources of available information. Such a collection usually includes dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks, or a combination of these, in the minimum number which will serve the purpose. When available to over primary patrons, online access is preferred. A basic information collection is not sufficiently intensive to support instruction in any course in the subject area involved. Ex: Atlases, General dictionaries, General directories, General Encyclopedias, General Reference works, Legal Dictionaries, Legal Directories, Legal Encyclopedias, and Thesauri.



Legal Information Resources

The legal education can do more than teach the societies rules to successive generations: it can inspire values of justice and promote social progress⁷. The law college/University of the country is the nucleus of the legal profession: and the bar, in term is the strategic source of evolutions of the bench.⁸

The quality of legal education holds the key to achieve the avowed ambitions and the dreams of the makers of Indian constitution. The legal education and its quality are reflected in the caliber of lawyers and judges. To support the legal system in meeting its goals and objectives in the era of globalization, legal profession requires crucial research inputs from the law Colleges and Universities. Besides imparting quality legal education, they are bestowed with the responsibility of providing quality legal research on the emerging and existing issues to serve valuable inputs for policy makers. As rightly pointed well equip libraries in law college/University are one of the crucial and essential conditions that are instrumental in imparting quality legal education and research.

Law Institutional Library Collections

The foundation collections of all law colleges/University libraries include the primary sources of legal authority produced by the major branches of government: reported court opinions (or cases); statutes enacted by legislatures; and executive or administrative materials (regulations and quasi-judicial rulings). Academic law libraries in the India typically include comprehensive collections of primary materials from the



Supreme Court and High Courts. In addition to primary materials, therefore, law library collections include large holdings of secondary materials-treatises, journals, encyclopedias, and a number of specialized forms of publications written to guide the researcher through the law on a topic, as well as indexes, digests, and other more typical finding tools. Some secondary sources are designed primarily for practicing lawyers and serve primarily to organize and provide access to the body of primary authorities on a topic, providing little in the way of detailed analysis or evaluation; others, including the journal articles and monographs produced by law professors and other legal scholars are more analytical, critical, and prescriptive in their approaches. Many academic libraries maintain at least small rare books collections both to support research and to reveal the importance of the historical record to the development of the law.

Types of Legal Literatures

Bare Acts, Commentaries on specific Laws, Manuals/ Local Acts, Reports, Law Commission Report, Committee/ Commission Reports, Annual Reports, Parliamentary Committee Reports, Joint Committee, Select Committee, Standing Committee, Gazettes, Central Government, State Government, Parliamentary Debates, Constituent Assembly Debates, Lok Sabha Debates, Rajya-Sabha Debates, Parliamentary Bills, Lok Sabha Bills, Rajya Sabha Bills, State Legislative Bills, Law Journals, Academic Journals (Containing only Articles), Law Reports (Containing Full text of case laws only),



Hybrid Journals i.e. combination of both containing Articles and case Laws some of the different type of legal literature is to be consulted for different type of information needs. In order to develop an appropriate and proportionate collection; a Law Librarian has to acquire each type of legal literature in his library. Besides, acquiring legal literature of different types, a law librarian has to develop many indigenous tools to manage up with the information requirements of the users.

Collection development Policy

Law Libraries are writing or updating their collection development policies, but often they are doing it to reflect changes in practice rather than changes in policy or institutional mission. Instead of a document that guides and shapes the development of the collection, policy statement is becoming a justification for short-term, expedient decisions. There is a very real need to documents decisions about format choices, consortia arrangements, retention policies and licensing provisions.

Main Objectives

To acquire materials in appropriate formats sufficient quantity. Depth and diversity to support teaching in the subject areas of the curriculum organize collections logically, making materials available for use in a timely, efficient manner. Assure equitable and unbiased access for patrons of the Institute to the law library's collections and services to provide guidance to readers in the identification, interpretation, and use of library materials and information. Provide the expertise necessary to



support the development, preservation, and security of the collections. House collections are in surroundings conducive to their use and preservation. Respond to the changing state of knowledge and the curriculum by continually evaluating collections and services, implementing change as appropriate. Establish and maintain cooperative agreements for resource sharing with other Libraries and organizations.

The law library attempts to fulfill its mission by achieving the following objectives:

1. Selecting and maintaining materials that are best suited for faculty and student instructional and research needs;
2. Providing online bibliographic access to information resources; and
3. Using the latest technology. It is important that the librarians and staff stay abreast of technological developments in the information field so our students will be competent in both manual and electronic sources.

Book Selection Tools

Every trained librarian might have learnt about so many book selection tools and it is, therefore, not necessary to list which are very useful and, if possible, they should be subscribed it is which has books on all subjects as , most of the items listed in such bibliographies will be useless for a library. The price and paid for such a bibliography will be a waste. It is; therefore, better to subscribe some special book selection tool meant for



libraries in such tool we will find books which are useful for libraries.

Law College/ Universities libraries provide materials appropriate for both class room instruction and learning at the undergraduate and post graduate level of education. Therefore, book selection is the most important and highest professional task of the librarian. In order to get details about the published literature, especially books, there are number of tools available to librarians. i.e. Bibliographies, Book Reviews in Newspapers, Publishers Catalogues, Online sources.

Law Library Collection Management

A fundamental process in establishing and maintaining an information system is the acquisition of necessary material. A policy on acquisition is essential, though it is a most neglected area. The acquisition policy varies from library to library, however, certain general policies can be drawn as a common policy for academic law libraries.

The purpose of an acquisitions policy is to provide for structured development of the library collection in accordance with defined goals. As such, it can have an impact on the future direction of the library, its research capabilities, and its reference services. It also can assist in the budget and space planning process. It is the goal of the acquisition process to provide quality research resources for the firm's staff within the constraints of the budget, and to effectively coordinate the book collection with the non-book materials and outside resources.



Library Acquisitions

The purpose of an acquisition policy is to provide for structured development of library collection in accordance with defined goals. As such, it can have an impact on the future direction of the library, its research capabilities, and its reference services. It also can assist the budget and space planning process.⁹ The purchase price discarded library materials is frequently added to the value of the collection at time of purchase and never subtracted.¹⁰ Although journals in the field of librarianship often include articles pertaining to acquisitions, they usually are geared to a broad audience and rarely tailored specifically to libraries. Some of these articles, however, provide information that is germane to librarians who work in acquisitions. This collection development policy supports these roles, and provides guidelines and a framework within which decisions regarding the existing collection and the development of future resources can be made. The collection development policy also sets out goals for the storage, retention, weeding, and preservation of library materials. Access to information housed in the library or available through the library is also considered. The collection development librarians should assume an active role in library faculty services programs college/ university library collection development.¹¹

Libraries responded to increases in supplementation costs by evaluating what materials were particularly necessary to keep up to date and by discontinuing those titles that were not deemed critical for the collection as a whole. It is only recently that electronic technology has begun to replace print resources. The



implementation of electronic formats can have a compelling upside, particularly for smaller nonacademic law libraries with space limitations.¹² While academic law libraries devote a large portion of their budgets to creating and maintaining their collections, little has been written about the organizational structures for the full range of collection development functions in this libraries.¹³

Methods of Selection

Keeping up with new publications in all formats is a daunting task for librarians. Traditional selection tools, such as bibliographies, catalogues and slips, are used less today because collection development is less systematic than it once was. Librarians rely on publishers' promotional materials, vendor demonstrations and trial subscriptions to evaluate and select electronic resources.¹⁴

Selection Criteria

In order to control unnecessary and or duplicative purchases, all publications which are to be paid for by the firm must be ordered through the library. The librarian will evaluate all requests for new purchases and submit a recommendation to the library committee. The library committee must approve all new purchases. Office copies are paid for by the practice group but are ordered and monitored by the library. They must be approved by the head of the practice group and by the library committee. The library will review its collection continuously in conjunction with the selection of new and replacement volumes.



All subscriptions and loose-leaf services up for renewal are evaluated yearly. Input is solicited from all the staff members if there is some question as to continued usefulness of a publication. With budgetary and space limitations it is impossible to purchase all requested library materials. Therefore, the following criteria are used in the selection process.

1. Need: The major reason to acquire a new publication is that it is necessary to an area of practice of the firm. Proposed acquisitions are evaluated based on the significance of the subject area to the firm, the projected use of the material, and whether the material is duplicative. Those titles acquired for a specific client or case and not generally relevant are usually charged to that client.

2. Cost: Cost factors considered in connection with proposed new purchases include the cost of the original title, the cost of supplementation, staff time required to update the publication, and shelf space required. The cost is also evaluated compared to other similar resources and as part of the total library budget.

3. Quality: The quality of library materials is judged by a review of the contents, and the qualifications and reputation of the publisher, author, and editor, compared to similar works on the subject. We have found that endorsements in the publishers' advertising material are not always reliable. Accordingly, we also consider: whether the item appears on one or more "recommended titles" lists or critical selective bibliographies; whether the item has been favorably reviewed in scholarly periodicals or similar evaluative tools.



4. Duplication: Duplication within the collection will be avoided unless there is a demonstrable need for additional copies. Each publication is evaluated in relation to the other materials in that subject area to avoid duplication.

5. Availability: For less frequently used or very costly materials the decision to purchase will also be evaluated in terms of how quickly and conveniently the material can be borrowed from area libraries, and how easily and/or economically it can be accessed via an online database. The library acquisition is "to acquire materials in appropriate formats and in sufficient quantity, depth and diversity to support the Academic needs of the faculty and students in the subject areas of the curriculum". In this process, it aims to foster an intellectual partnership with faculty and students to become involved in building its collection.

Selection and Acquisition

Collection development is an operation that involves regular additions to the existing collection of both in print and in other forms it also deals with weeding out damaged, unused and irrelevant materials from collection whenever necessary. The collection development is a continuous process in all types of Libraries. Different methods are being adopted by the libraries to develop collections. Selection criteria have multiplied along with new formats and user demands. Traditional consideration such as content, user need, other's reputation, publisher, cost and quality still apply no matter what the format. But currency, authenticity, and long - term availability, interface design, technical requirements, accessibility and functionality are important additional criteria for electronic resources.



Collection Development-Requirements

1. A well written policy
2. Analysis of user needs
3. Inter-and intra-library communication policy development
4. Budgeting and allocation of resources
5. Contract negotiations
6. Macro-evaluation of collections
7. Micro-evaluation for selection, preservation or withdrawal of stock
8. electronic resources selection tends to be a group activity rather than an individual activity, and
9. System evaluation.

Display of Library Collection

The extent of use of library resources depends on various factors. The degree of awareness the user is having about the available resources in the library is also one of the factor. The readers should be made aware of the newly acquired library materials (books, periodically, news papers etc) from time to time through same method of publicity. One of the mechanisms is to display information about the newly acquired titles and journals. Usually the books and periodicals are displayed in the book cases specially designed for the purpose.



Conclusion

The role of the law library is to satisfy the curricular and research needs of the academic law intuitions. The collection development have always been built to serve the user community, libraries today have a renewed focus on the more immediate needs of their primary users. While institutional mission statements still provide the frame work for collection development, only the largest libraries have the luxury of acquiring abroad range of scholarly materials that might be needed in the future. The role of the collection development librarian in academic law libraries is evolving in various ways. The changes driving this evolution include new definitions of collections, new issues introduced by electronic resources, increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary research, and an ever growing service orientation in academic law libraries. The development of new resources and services, combined with rapid changes in technology and methods of delivery, make this new century one of assure and excitement for any librarian interested in collection development. The Law Library is fully committed to providing legal materials in electronic format, including online, interactive video and web-based products. A conscious decision has been made not to provide materials in CD-ROM format due to the transitory nature of that format.



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