

Maintenance and preservation of library collection including non-book materials.

by

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1. Introduction:

In today's world of information society we talk of virtual library, library in an automated environment etc. But still majority of the libraries in India have it collection in book form. Unless we try to manage the traditional collection of the library, the question of giving judgement about digital collection does not arise. The library collection, after due processing should be housed to provide easy and convenient access to the library clientele. The maintenance of a library is entrusted with the task of physical storage of documents with their arrangement and other related activities.

Preservation on the other hand and binding are those aspects of librarianship that have frequently been neglected. It is generally acknowledged that in the present day pre-occupation with 'use of library materials' preservation aspect of documents has received too little attentions. Preservation is a branch of Library and Information Science is concerned with maintaining or restoring access to artifacts, documents and records through the study, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of decay and damage.

2. Books:

A book is a set or collection of written, printed, illustrated, or blank sheets, made of paper, parchment, or other material, usually fastened together to hinge at one side.

3. Non-book materials:

Non book materials are basically non-paper based which would include database, microforms etc.

- Cartographic materials: Atlas, maps etc
- Sound Recordings: Disc, tape (open reel to reel), tape cassette, tape cartridge, roll, sound recording on film.
- Motion pictures and video recordings
- Graphics materials

- Computer files
- Microforms

The generic term ‘non-book’ materials include two broad categories, print and non-print. The non print media are those on which printed words or visuals are not directly represented, such as magnetic tapes, digital recordings etc.

3.1 Non-print media:

The non-print media can be broadly categorized into following four types:

- i) Films
- ii) Magnetic materials
- iii) Plastic materials

Films	Magnetic materials	Plastic materials
a) Films strips b) Slides c) Cine films d) Microforms -Microfilm -Microfiche -Micro-opaque -Aperture cards	a) Tapes (i) Sound Tapes - Open reel - Cassette (ii) Video Tapes - Open reel - Cassette (b) Disc(Hard Disk)	a) Transparent plastics b) Vinyl Disc(Record Player Disc) c) Optical Storage (i) CD(Audio/Video) (ii) DVD(Digital Versatile Disc)

4. Maintenance work and management:

The ultimate success of various functions like acquisition, classification and cataloguing rests on the efficiency of maintenance work. No matter how well a collection is classified or catalogued, document cannot be serviceable to the user unless proper care is taken to organize and maintain the document collection. It is one of those less glamorous, nonetheless, very important tasks in the library. Maintenance work involves continuous monitoring of the proper stocking, arrangement and display of document on the shelves in the stack rooms and taking care of them. This essentially implies two aspects:

- i) Organization of the stack room and arrangement of document on the shelves.

- ii) Conservation of books i.e., overseeing and supervision the physical conditions of books, overall cleanliness of the stack area, etc.

Organization: In an open access library which allows users to browse, choose and select books of their interest, shelf organization and arrangement of document are of primary importance. The organization of the document should be done in accordance with the usage. Sometimes the classification schedule may not be as per expectation of the laymen's perspective. A classification scheme does not provide the sequence of subjects of books on their popularity.

Reference documents like encyclopedias, dictionaries, year books, directories, etc should be kept in a separate place for easy reach and uninterrupted use by reader.

Recent arrivals and documents on current interest must be displayed at a prominent place to attract the attention of readers.

Other documents must be stacked according to their popular use with reference to the subjects.

Conservation: The second aspect of maintenance work is book conservation. Only document in good physical condition should be allowed to stay on shelves. Constant self checking would allow us to remove the damaged documents. This is a healthy practice and should not be underestimated.

The stacks must be cleaned regularly to protect the documents from dust, dirt and insects. Air conditioning of stack rooms would be ideal to protect document from dust, heat and moisture.

4.1 Functions of maintenance:

The magnitude of maintenance work, like all other work in the library, depends on the size and complexity of the library and the quantum of operations. Decision regarding whether to have a separate maintenance section or not depends mainly on the intensity of operations. It also depends on the type of access the library follows i.e., open access or closed access.

The specific function of the maintenance work includes:

- Shelving
- Location of document
- Shifting of collection
- Dusting and cleaning
- Preparation and maintenance of guide
- Maintenance of documents

- Shelf rectification
- Maintenance of shelf list or register
- Stock verification
- Binding/Restoration
- Vigilance
- Conservation

4.1.1 Withdrawal and weeding:

In order to maintain a strong and efficient document stock withdrawal and weeding both are essential activities of a library. According to ALA minimum standard for public library system “Out dated, seldom used and shabby items remaining in the collection can weaken a library as surely as insufficient acquisition.”

A document may be withdrawn from collection from the stock register and shelf list if:

- It is outdated
- Worn out beyond repair
- Found lost in stock verification
- Damaged to the extent that it is unusable.

5. Preservation and Binding work:

Preservation and binding work is a very important work in a library which has always been taken very lightly.

Binding of book form document is important in the sense that there is a wide range of reason to do so. Well a binding policy need to be there for supporting the binding process. Some of the reasons for binding a document are as follows:

- The book might be damaged
- Some pages are missing
- The document is a periodical
- The document is a newspaper

Preservation and conservation are the term which are often used synonymously. Preservation is as much a management responsibility as binding. Preservation includes maintenance of objects in their original condition through retention, proper care and if it is damaged restoration. A pre-requisite for successful preservation programme is the need for clear understanding of materials from which items to be stored are made: Paper based material (books, periodicals, etc), photographs, slides, microforms, films, video tapes, sound recording, view disc and computer tapes and disks.

Some of the suggested steps for successful preservation planning as mentioned by Robert Patterson are:

- Examine the environment in the library and the condition of the collection.
- Prepare a disaster plan.
- Examine current practices (binding, handling, procession, repair techniques), recommend changes and ascertain additional requirements to meet current standards.
- Ascertain what professional conservation advice and expertise are available in the library.
- Time when and item needs treatment beyond the facilities available in the library or needs to be withdrawn from circulation.

6. Conclusion:

Maintenance of the collection of the library is an important aspect. The magnitude of maintenance work, like all other work in the library, depends on the size and complexity of the library and the quantum of operations. Shelving, dusting, stock verification, vigilance leads to the effective performance and use of the library. At the same time preservation and conservation of the collection is also necessary in order to provide the right information at the right time.

“PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE”

Quick Reference Guide for Care and Handling

Do:

1. Handle discs by the outer edge or the center hole.
2. Use a non-solvent-based felt-tip permanent marker to mark the label side of the disc.
3. Keep dirt or other foreign matter from the disc.
4. Store discs upright (book style) in plastic cases specified for CDs and DVDs.
5. Return discs to storage cases immediately after use.
6. Leave discs in their packaging (or cases) to minimize the effects of environmental changes.
7. Open a recordable disc package only when you are ready to record data on that disc.
8. Store discs in a cool, dry, dark environment in which the air is clean.
9. Remove dirt, foreign material, fingerprints, smudges, and liquids by wiping with a clean cotton fabric in a straight line from the center of the disc toward the outer edge.
10. Use CD/DVD-cleaning detergent, isopropyl alcohol, or methanol to remove stubborn dirt or material.
11. Check the disc surface before recording.

Do not:

1. Touch the surface of the disc.
2. Bend the disc.
3. Use adhesive labels.
4. Store discs horizontally for a long time (years).
5. Open a recordable optical disc package if you are not ready to record.
6. Expose discs to extreme heat or high humidity.
7. Expose discs to extremely rapid temperature or humidity changes.
8. Expose recordable discs to prolonged sunlight or other sources of ultraviolet light.
9. Write or mark in the data area of the disc (the area the laser “reads”).
10. Clean by wiping in a direction going around the disc.

For CDs especially do not:

1. Scratch the label side of the disc.
2. Use a pen, pencil, or fine-tip marker to write on the disc.
3. Write on the disc with markers that contain solvents.
4. Try to peel off or reposition a label.

General recommendations for long-term storage conditions:

For archiving recordable (R) discs, it is recommended to use discs that have a gold metal reflective layer.

Archival Storage Facility—Recommendation for storing CDs and DVDs together

Media Temperature Relative Humidity (RH)

CD, DVD Less than 20°C (68°F) 20% to 50% RH

Greater than 4°C (39°F)

A temperature of 18°C and 40% RH would be considered suitable for long-term storage. A lower temperature and RH is recommended for extended-term storage.

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About the Author:

Shri Manoj Rana did his graduation from St. Anthony College, Shillong with honours in Botany in 1994 and MLISC from North Eastern Hill University, Shillong in 1996. Beside these he has acquire PGDCA, Certificate in Applied Statistics, Certificate in Eco-Development from NEHU and Certificate in Tourism Studies from IGNOU. Presently he is working as Assistant Librarian in North Eastern Hill University Central Library. Prior to his present assignment he has worked as College Librarian of BBS College, Shillong from 1996 to 2005. He is also attached to IGNOU, Shillong as Academic Counsellor for BLISc and MLISc course since 2001. He has also worked as Guest Lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science, NEHU during the period from 1997-2001, 2006-2007.