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MAINTENANCE OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, you will be introduced to the numerous and varied responsibilities which are part of the maintenance section of any library. In the previous lesson, you have learnt about the maintenance of periodicals. The library collection, once classified and catalogued has to be housed properly, as its success is based on its timely availability to the users. This is possible, only if, proper care is taken to organize and maintain the library collection.

This lesson will discuss the issues related to organization of various library material. The lesson covers how materials organized and arranged in library shelves, stacking, shelf arrangement and stock verification. Binding of documents will also be covered, as it is essential for care and repair of documents for their long life.



OBJECTIVES

After Completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- assess the importance of maintenance work in a library;
- arrange and shelve the library material;
- identify the kinds of library stacks;
- take care of the documents;
- state the importance of binding for the documents;
- describe the role of stock verification; and
- manage different types of library equipments.



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5.1 MAINTENANCE WORK

In every library, maintenance of library materials involves continuous monitoring of the library's stack room, displaying of new books on the display rack and arrangement of the books on the shelves after use. Besides these, the books have to be dusted and cleaned at periodic intervals, the damaged and torn books have to be bound, the old and obsolete documents which are no longer in use have to be removed or withdrawn from the stacks. This also includes physical care of the books, that is, their protection from sunlight, dust, insects, moisture and heat. The maintenance work is related to many sections of the library. For example, processing section makes available the technical new books all the time and there is need to shelve these books within the already existing collection. This creates problems of shelving when books on the same subject are received in large numbers. These books have to be accommodated on the shelves without disturbing the order of arrangement of other collection. The circulation section too is involved. The users, all the time pick up books from the stacks, get them issued and eventually return them. These books upon their return from users are required to be put back on their proper place in the stacks. Therefore, all the time work related to proper shelving, re-shelving and maintaining the collection is going on. The maintenance section involves a number of tasks that the concerned staff has to be responsible for, on a daily basis.

Maintenance work thus consists of following:

- Shelving and re-shelving all the time.
- Maintaining order and cleanliness in the shelves and stack rooms.
- Supervision of the collection.
- Conservation and preservation of materials including repairs and binding.
- Stock taking and weeding.
- Maintaining the equipment of the library.

Let us now discuss some details regarding the maintenance work in a library.



INTEXT QUESTION 5.1

State True and False

1. Maintenance work in libraries does not include stock taking.
2. Maintenance does not include physical care of the books, their protection from sunlight, dust, insects, moisture and heat.
3. Maintenance work includes weeding.

5.2 STACKING AND SHELVING

The documents after processing are to be properly shelved and displayed. The

arrangement on the shelves should be to ensure that the most used books are in prominent places and not strictly as per the classification scheme. Oversized books are to be placed separately. The stacking of the documents should ensure that minimum of the space is wasted. All kinds of material, which includes both book and non-book, be placed properly. Documents should be shelved within proper lighting and there is sufficient provision for future growth of the library.

It is the responsibility of staff belonging to Stack Management to make sure that material is properly shelved, call numbers are in order, and all support to new services and projects are planned and implemented on timely basis. Many of the duties of the Stack Management employee require an understanding of work flow, adherence to standards, and attention to details.

5.2.1 Stacking Methods

There are various kinds of stacks and stacking methods available and these vary from library to library. The main consideration for any library should be to ensure that maximum space is utilized and the users too should find them convenient and easy while moving among the stacks. Shelves are either made of wood or steel. Depending on the available space, the authorities of library may decide to use single-faced or double-faced units. Some of the popular kind of stacks are discussed below:

(a) Fixed shelves with double rows

They are normal fixed shelves where material can be arranged in double rows.

(b) Hinged stacks

Here two shelves are joined together with hinges on one side and one shelf fixed while the other is mounted on front of the hinges.

(c) Rolling stacks

These are metal stacks units mounted on ball bearing wheel placed side by side.

(d) Compact storage

This system consists of units of three stacks, the centre row of fixed double sided stacks at each side. This helps in increasing the capacity of the storage space.

(e) Multitier stacks

This kind of stacking consists of stacks from floor to the roof and has become quite popular in very large libraries. It is to be noted here that, there should be adequate provision for expansion both horizontally as well as vertically. Besides this, the shelf should look beautiful, attractive, functional and be durable. Proper guides should be provided on the shelves.

5.2.1.1 Book ends/support/rest

The most popular type of book support is the plate type book support. These are available in two heights, i.e., 6" and 9" and are selected according to the height of the books being shelved.



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INTEXT QUESTION 5.2

Fill in the blanks

1. For increasing the capacity of storage space, a system of _____ is used .
2. Rolling stacks are metal stacks units mounted on _____ wheel placed side by side.
3. Popular type of book support is the _____ book support.

5.2.2 Shelving Methods

Proper shelf management is considered as a tool for measuring performance, satisfaction and realization of set goals of any library. After introduction of open access in libraries, the role of the shelving has taken the upper most priority in the libraries. Without accurate re-shelving of resources, effective library operation would be impossible for library staff and clients. It is an essential job which is time consuming and requires motivated staff to carry out well. The shelving of the documents should be such that user can find the required item without any inconvenience.

The most popular method of shelving is the arrangement in the classified manner as per the classification scheme used by the library. Some of the methods of shelf arrangement are discussed below:

a) Classified order

This is the most popular and the best method of shelving. Here all the books are arranged systematically as per the classification schedule. The user too finds it convenient and it is found to be the most useful method in open access system. It is to be remembered here that other categories of materials like maps, atlases, pamphlets, standards, patents and non-book material of all type are to be stored separately in the library. The arrangement of periodicals has already been discussed in the earlier lesson.

b) Arrangement by broken order

It is the arrangement of books not strictly in classified sequence. Here, reference books, fiction, special collections, etc. are shelved separately.

c) Arrangement by special sequence

Here books on the same subject are broken into three main categories oversized, undersized and normal. They are placed in separate sequences in separate places. This is an economical method but books on the same subject do get separated.

d) Arrangement by accession numbers

Books may be arranged by their accession number in libraries with small collection. But this system is very rarely followed. In open access and libraries having plenty of users this system is not at all used.

e) **Alphabetical by author/title**

This is the simple way of arranging books in small libraries as it is easier to maintain small collection alphabetically either by author or by title. However, even in larger libraries, fiction can be arranged alphabetically by author and if an author has written a large number of books then by title within the name of the author.



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5.2.2.1 How to Shelve a Book

To properly shelve books, few rules need to be followed:

1. Check call numbers around the items being shelved to verify correct order of shelf.
2. Items should be upright and shelves should be adjusted to the proper height for the items they house. If one or two items are too tall to stand upright, shelve them on their spines with the call number label facing out.
3. Items with call number labels that cannot be read should be given to the Technical Processing Section for re-labeling.
4. Items should be brought out to the edges of the shelves to make even, neat rows (called blocking.)
5. Each shelf should have a bookend at the end of the row.
6. Watch for crowded shelves. If an item does not slide back into its place with a gentle push, the shelf is too full. The proper method to remove an item is to push in the volumes on either side of it, then carefully grasp the center of the spine and remove it (not by pulling from the top of the spine.)
7. Items with damage (mold, mildew, insect, or tears on/to covers, pages, etc.) should be given to official responsible for binding work or placed on the damaged items shelf behind circulation desk. Check for sufficient air space behind the items on the shelves to allow for proper circulation of air.
8. Any loose papers or library items left at the end of each row or on the floor should be picked up. If the area is kept tidy, the users will tend to leave it that way.

5.2.3 Shelf Reading, Blocking and Shelf Rectification

Two tasks to be carried out by the maintenance staff on a daily basis are shelf reading and blocking. Shelf reading is when one reads every call number on a shelf to ensure that it is in the proper order. Blocking is when each book is brought out to the end of the shelf so that the entire shelf is lined up with the edge of the shelf and all books are standing upright with a book support/end placed at the end of each shelf. We can block as we shelf read or vice versa.

Books, after browsing by the users, are often misplaced on the shelves. Although, users are strictly instructed not to replace the books on the shelves but they may still do so. It is a known fact that a wrongly placed book is as good as lost. Thus, it is essential to restore the order of the books. This activity is referred to as shelf rectification.



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Pick up all the books returned by users at the circulation desk. Arrange and place all books in their respective places on the shelves



INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.3

Select correct option

1. Which is the most popular and best method of shelving?
 - (a) Classified order
 - (b) Accession number wise
 - (c) Alphabetisation by author /title
2. Fill in the blanks
 - (a) Each shelf should have a———— at the end of the row.
 - (b) Shelf reading is when one reads every———— on a shelf to ensure that it is in the proper order.

5.2.4 Stack Guides

The users are to be guided in the stacks by proper guides to find their way through the shelves. For this, it is essential that the documents are in their proper place. The following guides are required in the libraries:

- Tier guide for each tier of stacks
- Bay guide for every bay of shelves
- Gangway guide in each gangway
- Shelf guide with each shelf giving the class number contained in the shelf (i.e.starting number to the last number in the shelf)
- General guide to give an overall view of the library and arrangement of documents.
- General instructions should also be displayed in the library for guiding the users to different floors, location of drinking water, toilet, etc. There should also be proper display signs indicating silence to be maintained and non-smoking zones.

5.2.5 Shifting

Shifting is a common task in the Stack Management Department. It allows us to re-distribute space to areas of shelving that are in need of it. When shifting books, we typically allow for 5 years of growth, but you should always try to allow for as many years as possible. You can estimate the amount of growth by noting the average width of books on that shelf and then counting the number of new books from the past 5 years and multiplying. You should record these shelf by shelf, as it will make your planning go more smoothly later in the process. Another way to go about this

is to simply find out how much empty space you have and allow for the same amount on every shelf.

5.3 CARE, HANDLING AND REPAIR OF DOCUMENTS

We have already emphasized the importance of preservation and maintenance of the collection. The physical care and repair is another important function to be carried out in every library all the time. The repeated incorrect handling and storage of a book can quickly transform a new book into a wornout or even an unusable one. Proper handling and storage in a stable, cool, clean, non-humid environment can prolong its life. The books and the other reading materials should be cleaned as frequently as necessary and be kept away from dust, moisture, insects and fungi. The documents get damaged by dust/dirt, heat, dampness and insects. They have to be, therefore, cleaned with neat and clean soft dusters or cloth pieces. Vacuum cleaners can also be used to suck the dust from the books.

There are several kinds of insects which infest the books due to poor maintenance. Some common insects are silverfish, booklice, termite and firebrat. Documents should be, therefore, stored in clean and dry place only, as many of the insects breed in dust and damp environment. Regular cleaning too keeps away the insects. If large scale infestation has taken place in the library, the documents may be sent for thorough deinfestation. These days, many firms are specializing in this or the National Archives of India may be approached for advice. Naphthalene balls in perforated boxes can be kept on the shelves to avoid infestation.

New books soon after introduction into the library too should be physically prepared for tough handling by the users. The new books may be covered with plastic cover or spine be strengthened or bound if in paper back.

The books should be handled properly to prolong their life and save them from deterioration and damage. Books should not be jammed into the shelves or book cases with too much of compactness so that it is impossible to pull them out without tearing their covers apart. Also books should not be piled one over the other and placed in the shelves with their spines facing outside.

The books should be examined occasionally and those requiring minor repairs should be immediately repaired. Those requiring major repair or binding should be immediately withdrawn from the shelves and sent to the bindery.

Photocopying is also one of the major causes of damage to library books. Some materials are difficult to handle and copy safely. Most importantly, don't press down on the spine of books while photocopying and take extra care with large and heavy books. There are some types of materials which are so fragile that they should not be photocopied at all.

While transporting books within the library, if more items are to be moved, use a trolley. Never overload a trolley and make more trips, if need be.

5.3.1 Book Care and Repair

Many times, you can carry out minor repairs for your library books to prolong their life. Some such items requiring your attention are:



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1. Individual pages which are falling out or loose.
2. Rips or tears on individual pages.
3. The hinges are ripped or the cover is coming off.
4. Corners of the cover (hardback book) are wearing thin and you can see the cardboard.
5. Corners of a paperback book are curled.
6. End papers are coming out.
7. The spine cover, the joint, etc. is torn or coming off.
8. One or more of the sections in the text-block is falling out.

In other words, minor repairs can be carried out on the books by simply using glue or scotch tape or invisible tape. These help to prolong their lifespan.

5.3.2 Preservation and Conservation

Preservation is concerned with maintaining or restoring access to artifacts, documents and records through the study, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of decay and damage. It should be distinguished from conservation which refers to the treatment and repair of individual items to slow decay or restore them to a usable state. Conservation is occasionally used interchangeably with preservation and is the process required for care and repair of documents of any library.

Prepare some 'General Instruction Guides' for your library. Put up these guides at appropriate places. (For example, 'Silence Please', 'No Smoking', 'Walk softly', 'Staircase', 'Way to First Floor', etc.)



INTEXT QUESTION 5.4

State True or False

1. Conservation of library materials refers to minor repairing of spine careers of books .
2. Books requiring major repair or binding should be immediately withdrawn from the shelves and sent to the bindery.
3. Preservation is concerned with treatment and conservation refers to the maintaining.
4. Vacuum cleaner is used to repair damaged books.

5.4 LIBRARY BINDING

Library binding is the term used to describe the method of binding serials, and re-

binding paperback or hardcover books, for use within libraries. Library binding increases the durability of books, as well as making the material easier to use. If a library collection is extensively used, there is bound to be wear and tear of documents. Binding helps in strengthening the physique of the books and increases their life. It is a very important and routine activity of any library. Many large libraries have their own binderies but smaller ones have to get the books bound by professional binders. The desirable characteristics of any library book binding should be:

- The binding should be as conservative as possible, altering the text block minimally,
- The binding should be as non-damaging to the text block as possible and should not shorten its useful life,
- The bound volume should open easily to a 180° position to facilitate non-damaging photocopying, and
- The bound volume should stay open when resting face up on a flat surface so that the reader has both hands free while using the book.

Binding process is highly technical and requires lots of skills. There are eight processes involved in binding work:

- i. Collation
- ii. Sewing
- iii. Attaching covers
- iv. Endpapers
- v. Colouring edges
- vi. Headbands
- vii. Hollow backs
- viii. Finishing

Different kinds of documents require different types of binding. Some documents like fiction, popular type of material, less costly documents require only light binding. Just strengthening the hinges with paper or cloth is sufficient. Some large, oversized already bound books require just strengthening the hinges with paper and cloth. A majority of library books require proper binding. Referred to as library binding, these are of various kinds:

- Full leather binding
- Half-leather binding
- Full cloth binding
- Half cloth binding
- Perfect binding
- Plastic binding or cover



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The main purpose of binding of documents in the library is to conserve documents for future use. The materials that are selected and sent for binding are to be recorded properly. The binder has to be given instructions for binding process of the documents according to the type of documents given for binding. Binding work also includes receiving back the bound documents from the binder and sending the documents back to the shelves after proper checking of records and all paper work.



INTEXT QUESTION 5.5

Fill in the blanks

1. The main purpose of binding library documents is to _____.
2. Binding process is highly technical, there are _____ processes involved in binding work.
3. Bound volume should open easily to a _____ position to facilitate non-damaging.

5.5 STOCK VERIFICATION

Stock verification is the systematic checking of the library's holdings for finding out missing items. It helps in restoration of misplaced or missing items, finding out torn or worn out items for repair or binding and provides opportunity for cleaning and changing arrangement of documents. Each library should conduct periodic inventories, that is, stock verification in order to have an up-to-date record of library holdings, concrete data on rate of loss and to assess strengths and weaknesses in the collection. There are three techniques for library stock verification:

- i. Manual library environments – this is without help of computers and only with staff involvement.
- ii. Semi-automated library environments – partial use of computers.
- iii. Automated libraries - complete with the help of a Library Management Software. Given below are some methods of stock verification to be carried out manually:

Given below are some methods of stock verification to be carried out manually:

a) Shelf list method

Shelf list cards are used to verify the availability of documents on the shelves. After exhausting the tray the missing items are verified at all the sequences.

b) Accession Register Method

The availability of a document is duly marked against the accession number given in the accession register. After the end of the whole exercise, items left unmarked are listed and a further search for them is made.

c) Numerical Counting

Here all books on shelf and out on loan are physically counted and tallied with total number of books as per library's records.

The frequency of stock verification varies from library to library as it is a very time consuming process



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**INTEXT QUESTION 5.6****1. Select the correct option**

1. Stock verification refers to
 - (a) Checking proper arrangement of books on shelves.
 - (b) Counting number of books from the accession register.
 - (c) Systematically checking library holding for finding missing issues.

5.6 WEEDING

Weeding is a periodic or continual evaluation of resources intended to remove items that are no longer useful from the collection. Weeding is the process of withdrawing documents from the shelves for discarding permanently or transferring them to storage. It is an essential activity but unfortunately not usually carried out in Indian libraries. It helps to allow space for new materials and also ensures easy access to the available collection.

Some of the criteria for weeding are physical condition of documents, unnecessary duplication, older or outdated editions, poor content, unused documents and unsuitable documents in the library. In the present times, if the library is automated, the computer system can aid in the weeding process.

When considering weeding in a library, it should be kept in mind that every library is different; every library has unique priorities and problems. The disposal of the weeded out materials is usually a policy matter for higher authorities of the library to decide. Stock verification helps in the weeding process of the library material. The weeded materials may be sold, given away or destroyed.

**INTEXT QUESTION 5.7****State True or False**

1. One of the criteria for weeding is unused documents .
2. In an automated library weeding of documents becomes easy.



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5.7 LIBRARY EQUIPMENT

As modern libraries have to be multi functional, various kinds of equipments has to be acquired for various activities. This is besides the reading materials and library furniture. Equipment required by the libraries is usually manufactured specially for library use. The library equipment also includes the standard office equipment. However, we are here discussing some types of equipment found in various types of libraries:

- a) Filing and Record Cabinets
- b) Photocopying or duplicating equipment
- c) Computer Systems and related equipment
- d) Miscellaneous Equipment

a) **Filing and Record Cabinets**

Cabinets for filing various type of materials like card catalogues, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, patents and standards, microforms, disks and magnetic tapes are required.

Verticals filing cabinets with pull out drawers are used for correspondence and other files. Pamphlets, standards and patents are kept in specially prepared pamphlet boxes of various sizes and shapes with side or top openings. Periodical records, if maintained manually, are in kardex or a linedex as already discussed in the previous lesson.

b) **Photocopying or duplicating Equipment**

The present day libraries and their users have a lot of dependence on multiplecopies of documents. Photocopier is the most popular equipment these days for duplicating material.

c) **Computer Systems**

During the last few years, growing demands for having new and sophisticated approach to information access has led to the extensive use of computer based systems. Computers are very common these days in every type of organisation including the libraries. Computers are available from various companies and configurations depends on the memory capacity. Most of the computers, with INTERNET facility are available for easy information access. The modern computer systems these days are available along with printers, scanners and fax facilities. Most of the libraries presently are automated or are in the process of being automated.

Miscellaneous equipment

Besides the various kinds of equipment mentioned above, other equipments available in many larger/special libraries are also required. These are:

- 1) Bulletin board
- 2) Television and DVD player

- 3) Projectors and projection facilities
- 4) Electric stylus for writing on spines of the books
- 5) Vacuum cleaner for cleaning
- 6) Public Address system for announcements
- 7) Book Trolley, step stool and Step ladder



Activity

Observe the various items of equipment in your or in the nearby library. Make a list and try to use each one of them



INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.8

State True or False

1. Pamphlet need a special boxes for shelving in libraries.
2. Photo Copiers is the most popular Equipment for duplicating material .



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Maintenance is an important aspect of every library as the work carried out in this section is related to the collection. If the collection is not maintained properly, the users will be affected and there will be a problem in achieving the goals of the organization.
- Various aspects of maintenance work including shelving, location of documents, maintaining the guides, stock taking, weeding, binding and loss of books are all related to the physical access of the books to the users.
- Shelving refers to placing those materials in proper place that have been received after processing from the technical division. Stacks maintenance includes shelving and re-shelving library materials.
- Various functions of maintenance section include shifting of collections, preparation of guides for locating the materials, stock taking, weeding out, cleaning and dusting materials and maintaining vigilance in the library.
- Various kinds of library equipment are required in the modern libraries other than reading material and library furniture.



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TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Give a detailed account of the various areas of responsibility of the maintenance section of the library.
2. Explain the importance of stock verification in libraries.
3. Describe the important items of equipment required for library automation activity in your library.



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

5.1

1. False
2. False
3. True

5.2

1. Three stacks, Compact Storage
2. Ball Bearing
3. plate type

5.3

1. (a)
2. (a) Book end,
(b) Call Number

5.4

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. False

5.5

1. Conserve documents
2. Eight
3. 180°

5.6

1. (c)

5.7

1. True
2. True

5.8

1. True
2. True

TERMS

The terms covered in this lesson which require further explanation are typed below in an alphabetic order. The learners are required to explain each term.

Bindery:

Blocking:

Book Shelving:

Book Supports:

Maintenance:

Multi-tier Stacks:

Shifting:

Stacks:

Stock verification:

Weeding:



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