



PRESERVATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS IN SELECTED COLLEGE LIBRARIES IN THANJAVUR DISTRICT: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Libraries have a responsibility to preserve, conserve, and, if possible, restore their local history and local genealogical materials. These guidelines address the preservation, conservation, and restoration of heavily used, fragile, and rare local history and local genealogical materials.

A library is a repository of wisdom of great thinkers of the past and the present. It is a social institution charged with the responsibility of disseminating knowledge to the people without any discrimination. Any librarian responsible for the preservation of these documentary heritages should know the various causes of deterioration of the library materials and the possible methods for their preservation.

Except a few libraries, all others have paper based reading materials in the form of manuscripts, books, periodicals, paintings, drawings, charts, maps etc. The basic materials and constituents of the physical entity of these library materials are mostly organic in nature, which are susceptible to natural decay and deterioration. In books, apart from paper the other materials used are board, cloth, leather, thread, ink, adhesive etc. All these materials used are nutrition to some living organisms. So the library materials need protection from factors of deterioration.

KEYWORDS : *Libraries, Preservation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The term preservation is the maintenance of objects close to their original condition as far as possible, or until they are no longer need. According to Rufus Choate, "The book is the only immortally", hence it is the duty of the librarian to see that rare books and archive materials get preserved from the environmental, physical, chemical and biological factors. One of the functions of preservation is to collect the documents of the past and the present and to keep and maintain them so that they are available to both present and future users.

A major theme of the study is the value of systematic planning in conducting reviews of materials. Reviews that have set goals, identified appropriate participation, identified expected outcomes, and budgeted for expenses will likely be more successful and productive than reviews that lack these elements, conveniently structured in outline form, the study provide an introduction to the topic, principles for the care and handling of library materials followed by a complete overview of reviews for preservation, storage and withdrawal.

The terms preservation, conservation, and restoration as used in these guidelines are the simple definitions used by Wesley L. Boomgaarden:

Preservation: ". . . action taken to anticipate, prevent, stop or retard deterioration."

Conservation: the maintenance of each item in the collection in a usable condition. "

Restoration: ". . . the act of returning the deteriorated item to its original or near-original condition."

Objective of the Study

The specific objectives are to:

- To investigate the preservation and conservation techniques in use in the selected libraries.
- To investigate if there is a policy applied by these libraries in preserving the library materials.
- To find out the types of deterioration experienced in the selected library.
- To investigate the level of degradation of resources experienced in the selected libraries
- To investigate the level of use of ICT in preservation and storage of materials
- To discover possible challenges for effective preservation and conservation and to proffer solutions

Research Questions

- What preservation methods / techniques are used in the selected college's libraries?
- Are there any written or unwritten policy guiding the preservation of print materials in the selected college's library?

- What are the visible types of deterioration of print materials in the selected college's library?
- What is the extent of degradation of print materials in the selected college's library?
- What are the barriers to effective preservation of print materials in the selected college's library?
- What are the strategies for improving preservation of print materials in selected college libraries?

Significance of Study

This study will enhance preservation performance in libraries by enlightening librarians and non librarians on the importance of preserving their materials in the most suitable way for their libraries. It enables librarians make quick decisions on what to preserve immediately to reduce further deterioration and what can be postponed for future generations. The expected benefit of preservation is the awareness of the need to adequately reduce the rate of deterioration of valuable information resources of the library, thus making the materials available for future use.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bansa and Branches (1981) agree and submit that paper materials in libraries should be kept from harmful effects of light. They should be kept from changes in nature such as changes in the weather, temperature and humidity.

According to Madu (2004) libraries help to preserve for those who follow us our thoughts intellectual and historic records. It is very necessary for libraries to do everything they could do to avoid disaster by planning ahead of time, effort and resources

Olatokun (2008) surveyed preservation and conservation practices and techniques in Nigerian university libraries. He investigated the techniques used in preservation and conservation of library materials, causes and nature of deterioration. The findings revealed that preservation and conservation techniques were adopted but were not effectively used in all the libraries.

Jordan (2003) states that preservation is an umbrella term for array of activities, principles, practices and organization that ensure the usability, longevity and accessibility of recorded knowledge. Activities as stated that are currently defining the realms of preservation of library materials includes conservation (general collection repair and special collection) reformatting (microfilming, photocopying and digitalization), selection for preservation, environmental monitoring and contents care and handling of materials, disaster preparedness and recovery, standards relating to materials, practice and techniques, commercial binding and preservation education and training.

Banks (1981) stresses the importance of binding as a mode of preservation for book materials and suggests ways of going about them.

Plumbe (1992) says that most destructive agents of deterioration; insects and fungi. He concentrated his study on their effects on print materials and solution to the problems of deterioration, he also suggests practical solutions to each problems. Print materials i:e information sources, according to Aina (2002) they are materials consulted for knowledge about a topic, a theme, an event, a date, a number, a place or even a ward. Obi (2001) stressed further that all these information sources are stored in the library to provide information for users needs. There is need to preserve and conserve print materials to lengthen their life span.

Rosenberg (1993) is convinced that everyday care of the library books should be given special emphasis in preservation efforts. This conviction is based on the fact that quality and care of handling of books is a factor that prolongs the life of a book. IFLA (1986) defined preservation as to include all managerial and financial consideration including storage and accommodation provisions, staffing levels, policies, techniques and methods involved in preserving library and archival materials and the information therein.

3. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive method was used to gather data on preservation and conservation of print materials in selected Colleges Libraries in Thanjavur. The Colleges Libraries used are the following: Arts & science college libraries, Engineering college libraries, Poly technique college libraries
Frequency counts and simple percentages were used to analyses the data gathered.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents

| Sex | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Male | 26 | 52 |
| Female | 24 | 48 |
| | 50 | 100 |

Table 1 reveals that 52% of the respondents are male while 48% indicated females. The outcome shows that there are more female librarians than males in the college libraries under study.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

| Age | Frequency | Percentages |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| 20-30 Years | 15 | 30 |
| 31-40 Years | 10 | 20 |
| 41-50 years | 21 | 42 |
| 51-60 years | 4 | 8 |
| | 50 | 100 |

Table 2 shows the age brackets of respondents Ages between 41-50 years was in the majority 21(42%), 20-30 years, 15(30%), 31-40 years 10(20%) and the least 51-60 years 4(8%). The study reveal that there are more mature librarians in the college libraries because the age bracket between 41-50 years were in the majority when the study was carried out.

Table 3: Educational Qualification of Respondents

| Qualification | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| BLIS. | 15 | 30 |
| MLIS, M.Phil.. | 18 | 36 |
| PhD. | 12 | 24 |
| Others | 05 | 10 |
| | 50 | 100 |

Table 3 indicates the qualifications of the respondents. Those with BLIS 15(30%), MLIS, M.Phil. 18(36%), PhD 12(24%) while others 5(10%) were in the majority. The data shows that there are more professional librarians in the college libraries under study.

Table 4: Job Status

| Job Status | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Library Assistant | 15 | 30 |
| Library Officer | 10 | 20 |
| Librarian | 18 | 36 |
| Asst. Librarian | 07 | 14 |
| | 50 | 100 |

As revealed in the data in table 4. Library Assistants and Librarian constitute the majority of respondents i.e. 25(50%) while others, Library officer 10 (20%), Asst. Librarian 7 (14%).

Table 5: Years of Experience

| Years of Experience | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1-5 Years | 6 | 12 |
| 6-10 years | 15 | 30 |
| 11-15 years | 2 | 4 |
| 16-20 years | 14 | 28 |
| 21 years and above | 13 | 26 |
| | 50 | 100 |

Table 5 indicates the years of experience of respondents as 1-5 years 6(12%), 6-10 years 15 (30%), 11-15 years 2(4%), 16-20 years 14 (28%), 21 years and above 13 (26%). The data shows that the majority of respondents are not old in the service because their years of experiences ranges between 6-10years and 16-21 and above, which is an indication that they still have more years to practice and improve on their productivity.

Table 6: What Preservation and Conservation Materials are used in the Selected College Libraries?

| Print Materials | Arts & Science colleges | | Engineering Colleges | | Poly technique colleges | | Total |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Binding | 1 | 4.5% | 20 | 90.9 % | 1 | 4.5% | 22 |
| Fire Fighting equipment | 2 | 10 % | 14 | 70 % | 4 | 20% | 20 |
| Air Conditioning | - | - | - | - | | | |
| Photocopying | 3 | 33.3 % | 4 | 44.4 % | 2 | 22.2 % | 9 |
| Adequate security | 7 | 17.9 % | 20 | 51.2% | 12 | 30.7 % | 39 |
| Deacidification | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Use of insecticide | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Cleaning and dusting | 5 | 15.1 % | 17 | 51.5% | 11 | 33.3% | 33 |

Table 6 shows the preservation and conservation technique used in the college libraries. The table shows that adequate security and cleaning and dusting with total of 39 and 33 respectively was favored as the means of preserving and conserving print materials in the college libraries while binding and firefighting equipment 22 and 20 total respondent favored the use in their respective college libraries. No libraries in question uses, air conditioning, deacidification and use of pesticide and insecticides as a technique for preserving and conserving print materials. Are there any policy guiding preservation and conservation of print materials in college libraries?

Table 7: Preservation and Conservation Policy

| Policy Statement | Yes | | No | |
|---|-------|------------|-------|------------|
| | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage |
| Does the library have preservation and conservation policy? | 47 | 94% | 3 | 6% |
| Is the policy written? | 40 | 80% | 10 | 20% |
| Is the policy obeyed? | 41 | 82% | 9 | 18% |
| Does it guide staff? | 42 | 84% | 8 | 16% |
| Is the policy helping the security of the Library? | 44 | 88% | 6 | 12% |
| Does the policy address disaster? | 20 | 40% | 30 | 60% |

Table 7 indicated the policy and principles guiding preservation and conservation in the selected college libraries. The data shows that the college libraries are having a standing preservation and conservation policy, which is written, obeyed and it serves as a guiding tool to security of print materials, but the policies fail to address the issue of disaster management.

Table 8: What is the Extent of Degradation of Print Materials in the Selected Colleges?

| Print Materials | Arts & Science colleges | | Engineering Colleges | | Poly technique colleges | | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------|-------|
| | Count | Average | Count | Average | Count | Average | |
| Theft and mutilation of materials | 8 | 20 | 19 | 48.8 | 12 | 30.7 | 39 |
| Poor quality of paper materials | 9 | 19.5 | 21 | 45.6 | 16 | 34.7 | 46 |
| Broken spine of print material | 9 | 25 | 16 | 44.4 | 11 | 30.5 | 36 |
| Vandalisation of print materials | 7 | 23.3 | 11 | 36.6 | 12 | 40 | 30 |

Table 8 shows the extent of deteriorating of print materials, all the items identified in the table constitute to the deterioration of print materials, with poor quality paper material rank first a total of 48 respondents, broken spine of print material 36, theft and mutilation, 39 and Vandalisation 30. All the collage libraries indicated with high response rate in favour of poor quality paper material as a Contributing factor to deterioration of print materials.

Table 9: What are the Barriers to Effective Preservation and Conservation of Print Materials?

| Barriers | Arts & Science colleges | | Engineering Colleges | | Poly technique colleges | | Total |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------|----------------------|------|-------------------------|------|-------|
| | | | | | | | |
| Inadequate funding | 3 | 7.5 | 20 | 50 | 17 | 42.5 | 40 |
| Lack of infrastructure | 5 | 20 | 3 | 12 | 16 | 64 | 25 |
| Unqualified manpower | 7 | 18.9 | 16 | 43.2 | 17 | 45.9 | 37 |
| Lack of preservation policy | 8 | 17.3 | 21 | 45.6 | 17 | 36.9 | 46 |

Table 9 shows the barriers to effective preservation and conservation of print materials with lack of preservation and conservation policy as a barrier, followed by inadequate funding and unqualified manpower.

Table 10: What are the Strategies for Improving Preservation and Conservation of Print Materials?

| Strategies | Arts & Science colleges | | Engineering Colleges | | Poly technique colleges | | Total |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------|----------------------|------|-------------------------|------|-------|
| | | | | | | | |
| Manpower building | 10 | 22.9 | 20 | 44.4 | 15 | 33.3 | 45 |
| Adequate funding | 11 | 22.9 | 20 | 41.6 | 17 | 35.4 | 48 |
| Formulating preservation policy | 11 | 22 | 21 | 42 | 18 | 36 | 50 |
| Planned storage facility | 10 | 27.0 | 19 | 51.3 | 8 | 21.6 | 37 |
| Building unit | 7 | 30.4 | 11 | 47.8 | 5 | 21.7 | 23 |

Table 10 shows the strategies in improving preservation and conservation of print materials, it was shown in the data that a policy is required to be formulated, this is indicated with a total of 50 respondents, 48 respondents indicated adequate funding, 45 respondents manpower building. All the items indicated in the table demands attention except the bindery units with a total of 23 respondents in affirmation of it as a strategy for improving preservation and conservation in college libraries.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The study revealed that the majority of responded are females.
- There are more mature librarians in the College libraries as indicated in the study.
- Age distribution shows that the majority of respondents still have more years of service as indicated.
- Adequate security, cleaning and dusting were the preservation and conservation techniques used in the college libraries.
- The libraries have preservation and conservation policy, written and obeyed by the staff, but the policy did not address the issue of disaster management.
- Wear and tear due to over use and photocopying were indicated as the visible deteriorating agents.
- Poor quality of paper material, theft and mutilation of materials constitute the extent of degradation.
- Lack of preservation and conservation policy, inadequate funding and unqualified manpower was a barrier to the effective preservation and conservation of print materials.
- Adequate funding, and policy formulation and manpower capacity development was recommended based on the outcome of the study.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

As revealed in the study on the preservation and conservation of prints materials in selected college libraries in Thanjavur. It was revealed that print materials deteriorate because of overuse and the extent of photocopying. It is recommended that multiple copies of print materials should be made available to avoid readers scrambling for few available copies.

In house clearing and dusting should be done at regular basis to avoid the invasion of pests and insects. Copyright laws should be enforced in libraries to reduce plagiarisms, this preventing photocopying of full text which weakens the spine of books. Damaged items should be removed from the shelf to the bindery and returned when the repair is fixed.

CONCLUSION

The libraries are saddled with the responsibility of acquiring and preserving library resources for historical use, these material needs to be preserved and conserved to prolong their life span.

Librarians should make sure that materials in their custody are protected and the governing body of the colleges libraries in Thanjavur district should be develop and monitor their preservation policy.

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