

## WEEDING OUT LIBRARY MATERIAL IN COLLEGE LIBRARY

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**Abstract:** - Requirement of weeding is a need of the hour in order to keep the collection up-to-date, thus facilitating the user's in easily locating the books of his or her own interest. Weeding out policy is important for collection development in library. Weeding out of library material is an inseparable procedure in library management. Library professional have to face various challenges during the process of weeding. This is the one of the most important activity of library. By doing this activity, Library professional are tried to update & alive library collection by removing outdated collection. It is a continuous and periodic process of withdrawing unused, obsolete and physically damaged documents from the library stack.

*This paper described in detail every aspect of weeding of library material like it's definition; concept etc. Weeding out policy of Library material is also described like Why to weed out? What to weed? When & how to weed? How should weed? etc. Types of materials to be weeded out explained in detail. What to do with material after weeding? is also mentioned. It's need, Barriers in weed out process, criteria for weeding, guidelines for weeding is also described in brief. Paper throws light on Issues & challenges of weeding Library material. Weeding out Library material procedure also described. It's significance, pros & cons of weeding out Library material is also mentioned.*

**Keywords:-** Library collection, Library weed out policy, Library material, Weeding, ALA, Library material.

### Introduction:-

Weeding is a process of removing library material from collection based on certain criteria. Whole library material should be relevant, up-to-date material. It is a continues process which depend upon many factors like age of material, physical condition, number of circulations etc.<sup>1</sup>

The usage of library material causes wear and tear in the collection & many a times collection is to be evaluated & maintained properly for better utilization. Need based

collection help in getting the desired documents from the collection. Weeding out of the material from the library is an essential activity in every library for maintain useful collection. There are various issues and reasons to weed the collection. Weeding of mutilated and unused documents is the process which is to be conducted at regular intervals to keep the collection useful.<sup>2</sup>

In college library every year purchase the books & subscribed journals because the every after three years the change the syllabus & book

purchasing is essential according to new syllabus, so the increased collection of old syllabus book, it occupies the space. The big question about the space & maintenance of collection before librarians arises so weeding out of collection is necessary for give the properly service & follow the Ranganathans law save the time of reader.<sup>3</sup>

“Weeding” is continuous evaluation of resources to remove the resources from the collection those are no longer useful, in appropriate or rarely used.”

The main objective of weed out library material is to increase the accessibility & effectiveness of library stock. Library collection is growing every day & occupies a huge space. It's duty of the librarian to weed out library materials that are old/damaged/obsolete/unused collection/out of syllabus textbooks etc. It's a part of collection development policy. The weeding saves space & also help of keep the collection lively & healthy for it's users. It involves the planned removal & disposal of outdated, unused & unwanted materials. The so that library stock remain relevant & attractive.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Definition of Weeding:-**

Harrods Librarian Glossary and Reference Books defines weeding as “discarding from stock, books which are considered be of no further use.”<sup>5</sup>

According to Arizon State Library “weeding is an essential element of collection development that ensures the libraries materials are useful & accessible.”<sup>4</sup>

#### **Concept:-**

Weeding is the periodic and continues evaluation of library's resources with the goal of removing obsolete, damaged & rarely used books. Weeding ensures that the library materials are useful, attractive and accessible to users. Every library's print collection is limited by the space available and collection must change over time to reflect changes in the community. Like all collection development processes, weeding should be covered by the library collection development policy.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Library Material:-**

The library collection consists of materials in various formats both physical & electronic. A library collection includes Print material e.g. books, periodicals, newspapers, manuscripts, rare collection, special collection, Govt. publications etc. Non-book material like films, maps, microform. The digital collection features media in a variety of formats, including CD's, Cassettes, Videotapes, DVD's, Blu-ray Discs, electronic books, audio books, databases, board games & video games. The library material has it's span of life & has to be evaluated for removing not used & worn out collection.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Documents Not to be Weeded<sup>8</sup> (Retention of documents):-**

- Historical & geographical importance, Maps
- Classified documents, Rare & out of print documents, Manuscripts etc.
- Literary Classics
- Award winning books.

- Books by prominent authors (Local & National)
- Rare collection, Manuscript etc.

#### **Why to Weed Out:-**

Weeding out process is necessary due to:<sup>9</sup>

- Creating space for new additions on the shelves.
- Remove outdated collection.
- Updating & organizing collection.
- Keep the collection live & healthy for users.
- Provide greater accessibility to the collection & save the time of the users in getting pin-pointed information.
- To enhance the reliability and up-to-datedness in collection.
- To have a continuous check on the repairs in collection.
- To get feedback on the collection i.e. strength & weaknesses in collection

The Weeding process satisfies the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Laws of Library Science enunciated by Dr. Ranganathan.

Shinde Maya<sup>10</sup> also started in following manner.

- Make the library easier for users and staff to use.
- Maintain the library's reputation for providing reliable information.
- Eliminate false or dangerous information.
- Provide feedback on strengths & weaknesses in a collection.

#### **Purpose of Weeding:-<sup>11</sup>**

- To weed out older & outdated syllabus books.
- To weed out damaged books.
- To make space for current & updated library material.
- To save space, money & efforts etc. because libraries have limited space & infrastructure. As well as libraries are growing always which needs space for storage.
- To remove duplicate materials which have less values.
- To remove less demanded books.

#### **What to weed:-<sup>11+</sup>**

1. Mutilated books because of constant use.
2. Worn out material.
3. Outdated books specially text books.
4. Out of syllabus books.
5. Reference books which are published periodically have to be replaced by new edition like yearbooks, annuals, handbooks etc.
6. Materials which are now available online may be discarded such as old CD's, Microforms.
7. Keeping in mind fifth law of library Science, library always grow, it is necessary to remove unserviceable material.
8. In the field of Science & technology the development are so fast that the books published 20 or 30 years ago become outdated such books have to be weeded out and replaced by latest edition or new books on the subject.

**When & How Weed?**<sup>11</sup>

Librarian may weed out library material anytime throughout the year. Material which are found to be unserviceable may discarded

At least once in a year whole library collection should be examined. Annual weeding out of unwanted document is ideal. Dr. S. R. Ranganathan observes that “many of the modern books get outdated in ideas expounded in them within 20 years. After that periods such book should be written off.” Before weeding documents it should be ensured that it has been outdated & latest edition may added to collection. The entire process of weeding should be done with prior permission of competent authority & resolution made by competent authority for weeding out should be recorded and books withdrawn should be marked in accession register & in software also.

Weeding out requires necessary judgment & expertise, for that librarian should involve personally in this process. Also Library committee members, Senior faculty members, Subject experts may be involved for making decision.

Finally a library should always keep in Ranagnathan’s 5<sup>th</sup> law “Library is growing organism” with the increase in the number of documents space becomes a problems. So it’s essential to weed out all unserviceable material to find place for new documents.

**When to Weed?**

In College & University libraries,<sup>12</sup> every time a book is handled in the library, it should be

examined from the angle of physical condition & it’s continued suitability. The entire collection should be inspected at least once a year. Annual weeding from unwanted papers is ideal.

**Who Should Weed?**

To face & solve the various challenges regarding weeding out in college library the librarian should constitute committee to make policy & to take decision to weed out the reading material of the library. The formulation of the committee should be given below.<sup>13</sup>

Responsibility	College Library
Chairman	Principal
Member	Representative from Head of Department (Any five)
Member	One representative from non-teaching staff
Member	One student representative
Secretary	Librarian

**Format & Material Type:-**<sup>14</sup>

- Books
- Journal & other recurring publication
- Microforms
- Media Materials
- Maps
- Federal Documents
- Reference Material

**Material to be Weeded Out:-** A brief overview of which material to weed is given below.<sup>15</sup>

1) **Books**

**A) Lost Book:-** When a book is lost by student, by a teacher, it is necessary to weed such books from the stock register because it is dangerous to have the book in the stock register. When the book is not physically available in the library, as it may raise a question mark, the librarian should be careful.

**B) Multiple Copies:-** Sometimes we see that many copies of the same book are available in the library. These books can be textbooks or literary works available in the library. Additional copies should be weed by keeping certain copies of such requirement.

**C) Physically Worn Out Books:-** Information in some old book is useful, that book is turned then such book should be bound & kept in library. Books which are not useful & information in them is expired, should be weeded.

**D) Reference Books:-** Like yearbooks, annuals, handbooks etc. Those published from time to time should be replaced with new version & old version should be discarded.

**2) Journal / Periodical:-** Journal should be withdrawn from the library after their frequency of use decreased.

**3) Non-print Material:-** Storage materials that are damaged for ex, CD's & DVD's. They should be weeded out by considering their usability, testing, reviewing the current situation & looking.

**4) Momentary Material:-** Materials which are transitory e.g. newspapers, magazines, Information sheets, reprints, preprints, bulletin should be kept up-to-date by removing materials

which are in low demand & which do not need circulation for a long period of time.

5) Audio-Visual materials, hardware & Software also age, break & change due to new technologies, Internet website links may disappear. Website may change content or impose restriction on accessibility.<sup>15(b)</sup>

### **What to do with material after weeding?**

There are four basic ways to dispose of print & non-print materials.<sup>16</sup>

**1) Sells It:-** The weeded material should be sold, either to the public or vendor.

**2) Donate It:-** You can donate books to small libraries, hospitals, nursing homes, hostels, adult or Juvenile reformers & Charities.

**3) Recycle It:-** Large companies, local government agencies & local contractors should give out-of-date books for recycling.

**4) Destroy It:-** Weeded materials should be burnt in an incinerator, before making sure that people are not seen around, otherwise they may be mistaken for destroying important books.

### **Policy for Weeding out Library Materials:-**

As per the **CREW** method (Continuous Review Evaluation and Weeding) following are the criteria for developing a policy for the weeding of library materials.<sup>17</sup>

**M:-** Misleading, factually inaccurate

**U:-** Ugly, worn beyond repairing

**S:-** Superseded, by a new edition / a much better book on the subject.

**T:-** Trivial, of no discernible literary or Scientific merit.

**I:-** Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the users.

**E:-** Elsewhere, the material is easily obtainable from another library.

### **Need for Weeding Out Library Materials**<sup>18</sup>

- 1) To maintain the collection as per current syllabus for student, faculty members & researcher.
- 2) To make empty space for new collection.
- 3) To improve the Lending service very efficiently.
- 4) Student & faculty members search the material easily & properly.
- 5) Arrange the collection of library attractively & user friendly.

Weeding is necessary for the collection development & to strengthen collection, make material easy to browse & accessible. It removes outdated, deteriorated, no longer useful material permanently from collection.<sup>19</sup>

### **Barriers in Weed out Process of the Library**

Though weeding of library material is a mandatory requirement for maintenance of library.

**Bondge & Panchal** mention following barriers.<sup>19</sup>

- Due to space constraints there are many obstacles in the weeding out.
- While working in a library, librarian develops emotional attachment with library material, it is difficult for them to discard library material.
- Inability of librarian to discriminate used & unused material.

- Difficulty in deciding the criteria for weeding the material deliberately.
- Inefficiency to reach out the authorities or adult management for making proposal for weeding of expensive library material those were purchased with heavy expenditure.
- Unwillingness of management & administrative committee for disposal of unused material
- Lack of time & attention to select & isolate unused material
- Lack of trained library personnel.

**Gokhale, Patil & Jadhav**<sup>20</sup> also mentioned following barriers.

- Lack of staff to conduct physical verification and weeding.
- Time consuming process.
- Reluctance in accepting selection mistakes.

### **Criteria for Weeding:-**

All types of library material eligible for weeding should be selected on the basis of following criteria.<sup>21</sup>

- **Utilization:-** The most important factor in weeding decision is utilization of materials. Library professional should analyze circulation statistic or other reports to decide weeding of such unused library material.
- **Physical Condition:-** Some of the library material made of paper is so badly damaged or deteriorated that it's reasonable preservation is very difficult or even impossible, such badly deteriorated material should be considered for

weeding depending on the individual condition of the item.

- **Duplicate Material:-** Library may weed duplicate copy of library material to save the space when limited space is available
- **Incomplete Material:-** In some multi volumes some set are absent such incomplete volume set is no longer useful for the endures. such volumes can be weeded out.
- **Uniqueness:-** Unique library material which is rarely available should not be considered for weeding.
- **Obsolete:-** Material having obsolete formats or poor condition can be weeded if the content is available elsewhere.
- **Currency:-** Library material should have accurate & up-to-date content. The old material which is superseded by revised or updated editions can be weeded deliberately.

**Shinde Maya**<sup>22</sup> also mentioned following considerations for weeding resources.

- **Poor content:**

- 1) Content is outdated or obsolete.
- 2) Content is biased, racist or sexist.
- 3) Content is irrelevant to patron needs (or not being used in a colleges curriculum.)
- 4) Content is too mature / immature for patrons  
(especially important for college libraries)

- **Poor Condition:**

- 1) Resource has irreparable damage (torn pages, broken spines)
- 2) Resource is dirty or smelly.
- 3) Resource would not survive further circulation.

- **Poor Circulation:**

- 1) Resources are not being used by users in certain time frame should be weeded.

- **Other Consideration:**

- 1) Multiple copies that are not needed.
- 2) Enough resources on a particular subject.
- 3) Replacement of the item and the cost of replacing it.
- 4) Visual appeal of the item.

**Veer Chaitnya**<sup>22(b)</sup> also mention following criteria for weeding library maternal 1) Out of syllabus text books. 2) Damage books by various insects 3) Natural calamities 4) Accidental damages.

**Guidelines for Weeding:-**<sup>23</sup>

- 1) Raftaele and Shishko suggested that publication date should be an important criteria for document weeding.
- 2) Fussler and Simon felt that past use is the best guide to future use of documents.
- 3) The American Library Association Council of ALA believes that in public libraries “annual withdrawn from collection should average at least 5 percent of the total collection.”
- 4) Trueswell developed a technique eliminate collections that would ensure satisfaction at a given rate in the future by examining past usage.
- 5) Sinha Committee Report (Library Advisory Committee Report) (1958) holds a similar new in the case of Indian public libraries. The Report observed “weeding out of worn & out of date books is as important in a public library as acquisition of new books....It is said a librarian

should discard 5 percent of his fiction & 2 percent of his non-fiction every year....”<sup>24</sup>

6) Ranganathan observed that “many of the modern books get out moded in ideas expounded in them within 20 years. After that period such books should not be preserved in library put should be weeded out & written off.”<sup>24</sup>

**Issues & Challenges of Weeding Library**

**Material:-**

Baheti<sup>25</sup> R. G. mentioned following issues & challenges of weeding library material.

**Issues:-**

- a) What material should be weeded out?
- b)When the weeding work is to be done?
- c) Who should do this job in successful manner?
- D) What policy needs to frame to weed out the reding material?
- e) How to weed out the print & non-print material?
- f) Which is the best policy to do with weeded out material?

**Challenges:-**

- a) Holiness of the information resources.
- b) Love & hesitate to weed out the numbers.
- c) To do lot of work for weeding out.
- d) Anxiety about audit.
- e) Face the authority.
- f) Comments by the user.

**Weeding Out Library Material Procedure:-**

Library material should be weeded out in every year. The following are steps taken for weeding out library materials in general.<sup>26</sup>

- 1) Identifying the library materials (Books, periodical, IT Material) to be weeded out.
- 2) D-Shelving and organization of library material order- These library materials are organized as per the Accession Register in ascending order.
- 3) Preparation of the List as per format.
- 4) Approval in Weeding Out Committee (WOC) for list of Library material to be weeded out.
- 5) Make notice to faculty.
- 6) Present to Library Advisory Committee.
- 7) Checking the List of Library Material to be weeded out by Institution Auditor.
- 8) The Final report of the Institution Auditor send to Higher Authority.
- 9) Approval of Higher Authority.
- 10) The WOC approves & Higher authority decision of the institution.
- 11) Information to Account Section.
- 12) Write-off from Accession Register.
- 13)The Library Material disposal.
- 14) Announcement for weeding out Library Material.

**Pros & Cons of Weeding out Library**

**Material:-**

Library weeding is a process that makes the library rich in collection & also the user friendly.<sup>27</sup>

**1) Pros of Weeding out Library Material:-**

- 1) Space for new arrivals.
- 2) Update the collection.
- 3) Easy to access by staff & users.
- 4) Increase the Reputation.
- 5) Misleading Data elimination.



6) Feedback mechanism for collection development.

Aanandkar<sup>28</sup> also mentioned following benefits.

To save space.

- To save the time of staff & reader.
- To make the collection more appealing.
- To keep up with collection needs.
- To get constant feedback on the collection's strength & weakness.

#### **Cons of Weeding library Material:-**

1) **Weeding Material Value** - The material which is weeded out from libraries are very low value.

2) **Threats of Number of Loss** - Some Institute avoids giving permission for weeding out due to threat of number of books will be decreased after weeding out.

3) **Loss of Useful Information:-** The material like books / periodical which is weeded out on the basis of physical condition, which having important information or historical importance. Sometime it will useful in future.

4) **Time Consuming:-** Weed out library material it consumes lot of time in the process like collecting record numbers, permissions, withdraw from register & software if available & sale out the material.

#### **Significance of Weeding out Library Material:-**

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1) **Implementation of the fourth & Fifth law of library Science:-** According to the Dr. S. R. Ranganathan 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Laws 'Save the time of users' and 'Library is growing organism' in this

context Weeding out Library Material is essential for implementing these laws in our library.

2) **Role of Librarian as a Gardener:-** In the internet age, librarians plays vital role for navigating the right information to the right users. They act as similarly Gardener and try to weeding out unnecessary library collection.

3) **Shortage of Shelf Space:-** Every library has limited shelf space & 'library is growing organism.' Therefore, the library professionals are facing problems in creating space for new books and furniture as well as to manage library collection.

4) **Increasing use of E-resources:-** Today, the widely use of E-resources due to it's significance and portability. The users preferred E-resources than printed books.

5) **Maintenance and Preservation of library collection:-** The library professionals spent lot of works and cost on preservation & maintaining the library collection. So the cost and valuable time of human resources are wasted on unnecessary library collection.

#### **6) Problems of damaged books:-**

The library professional faces problems towards damaged unnecessary books for their binding and maintaining a good library collection.

#### **7) Visible or alive of library collection:-**

The weeding out library material is necessary for the up-to-date library collection, visible or alive collection, to give space for new books.

### Conclusion:-

Every year Library Material should be weeded out so that library collection may become alive & up-to- date. It helps not only in keeping collection dynamic & current but also helps in marketing of library products & services. It also helps the library to know the strength & weakness of it's collection. Weeding out of Library Material is part of collection development.

Librarian must conduct weeding out Library Material in every year. Weeding out Library Material solve the problems of space, cost, time & human effort. Weeding helps the library to provide relevant, accurate & up-to-date information or material to it's users. Every College Librarian must formulate it's Weeding Policy. Nowadays weeding is become indispensable activity of library.

The weeding of Library Material is an integral & vital activity of each & every library. This activity is most beneficial to each & every library. Because it create space for it's collection, saving the time of reader & staff, making it's collection more appealing, accurate, current & accessible.

But many libraries are not performing this activity or task of weeding out Library Material due to various reasons. It is a continuous process. Library Professional have to face various challenges during the process of weeding. Librarian must face these challenges & He/She must conduct task of weeding out Library Material in every year.

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