

Use of Books in Jadavpur University: An Evaluative Study to Find Out Suitable Collection Development Policy

Abstract

This study explores the evaluative use of books within Jadavpur University Library to inform the development of a strategic, user-centric Collection Development Policy (CDP). Drawing from extensive data spanning 1955 to 2023, including accession registers, circulation statistics, and departmental catalogues, the research identifies critical gaps between library holdings and actual usage trends. Key findings highlight a stark decline in book circulation, disproportionate underutilization across Arts and foundational Science subjects, and robust alignment in Engineering collections. The study also reveals that faculty-selected and newer editions are significantly more engaged with, while indiscriminate or outdated acquisitions contribute to low utility rates.

A detailed quantitative breakdown shows that despite expansive holdings—over 693,000 volumes—the majority remain underused, especially in disciplines such as History, Economics, and Bengali. Conversely, subjects like Civil and Mechanical Engineering demonstrate high usage efficiency, indicating successful alignment with academic and curricular priorities. Financial analysis identifies mid-priced books as cost-effective and calls for optimized acquisition strategies.

The research culminates in a suite of policy recommendations, including the institutionalization of periodic usage evaluations, adoption of demand-driven and interdisciplinary selection models, systematic weeding, targeted budgeting, and enhanced promotional strategies for recent acquisitions. It underscores the urgency of implementing a comprehensive CDP tailored to evolving academic demands and user behaviour. Ultimately, the study contributes to library science by advocating for a dynamic, data-driven policy framework that promotes resource relevance, budgetary efficiency, and academic excellence.

Keywords: Use of Books; Jadavpur University; Collection Development Policy; Evaluative Study; Library Usage Patterns; Library Collection Evaluation; Collection Assessment.