

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF LIBRARY COLLECTIONS AND COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGES OF BIHAR

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1. Introduction

Collection Development (CD) is a continuous process of acquiring information resources that involves selecting, acquiring, organising, preserving, and weeding materials based on the library's needs and users' interests (Gawadekar et al., 2024). CDP is a formal document, the preparation of the CD and review of the collection to help libraries achieve the goals of developing an effective collection in the library (Saikia & Barooah, 2024). Libraries are basically known for systematically storing information resources so they can be retrieved as needed. A library can be part of the institution, where the library is accountable for developing a Collection Development Policy (CDP) to support the institution's curriculum needs and users' professional needs (Caborero & Mayrena, 2012). The library builds its collection in line with the nature of its parent institution and its users' requirements (Jan & Ganiae, 2019). Overall, CD refers to the process of building and maintaining the library's collection and services (Reddy & Chandraiah, 2017).

A higher education institution's academic library prompted CDP to determine which resources and services the library requires to serve the institution. The policy determines the budget allocation across departments and communities. As per the CDP, the amount of budget to be expended is determined. The library purchases not only physical resources but also a large number of e-resources. In today's digital era, libraries face a significant challenge in subscribing to e-resources to meet library users' needs. In the era of e-resources, many scientific journals and academic tools are expensive, especially in the fields of health and biosciences (Kananen et al., 2006). Users demand the resources through the library to the institutions. Libraries have to decide whether to prioritise users' requests for the most important documents. This library works with the library committee, where students, faculty, and library professionals come together to smoothly apply the budget policy and its requirements. When the library could not purchase a few of them, it turned to alternative services to meet users' needs, such as document delivery and interlibrary loan. Libraries not only purchase or subscribe to materials but also provide systematic organisation for their users. It also maintains accountability for resource utilisation by hosting numerous outreach programs, including orientation, workshops, awareness, and literacy programs. It is responsible for maintaining records and preserving knowledge resources, especially the management of Institutional repositories. It also provides a report on utilisation and subscriptions to help the library committee make informed decisions, such as which subscriptions to keep. What to purchase, what not to purchase, and what to weed out. Under the CDP, the library's human power and timing are also determined. What should the library's timing be, and how long can a library serve? All these operations fall under the CDP, which shapes the library's overall culture. Basically, CDP is designed to determine how a library should be operated and the best way to serve the community.

2. Background of the Study

A collection development policy (CDP) is a tool or strategy for medical libraries that guides collection

development to meet the library's goals and users' needs (Gawadekar et al., 2024; Reddy & Chandraiah, 2017). To build an effective collection for the library user, CDP is important (Saikia & Barooah). Within the institution, the library is responsible for providing high-quality information resources to students and faculty, and, to this end, it faces significant challenges in accessing high-quality books, scientific journals, e-books, and academic tools to deliver the best services. To overcome these challenges, CDPs are developed (Kananen et al., 2006; Saikia & Barooah, 2024). CDP is not only a document that serves as an assessment of the overall library collections and reflects library collection development, but also helps inform future policies for institutes or universities (Tokarz, 2024). CD is an ongoing process that culminates in selecting, acquiring, organising, preserving, and weeding materials in line with the library's mission (Gawadekar et al., 2024; Saikia & Barooah, 2024). Reddy & Chandraiah (2017) acknowledge that Dr SR Ranganathan's ideas on various facets of CD are noteworthy; in fact, his five laws of library science serve as the basic guidelines for formulating policies on CD. CDP is also used to develop policies for keeping documents technically organised, including which software will suit the library, cataloguing/metadata policies, which classification tools should be used, and which standards should be maintained in the library (Prabhavathi & Ilanchitran, 2020). The main goal of CDP is to fulfil the user's demand for factors such as acquisition, performance, circulation policy, library operations, and promotion activities, and to enhance library user skills (Rashid, 1990). The library not only purchases items but also decides which resources are most appropriate for its users, providing maximum value within a limited budget while remaining profitable (Kananen et al., 2006).

Based on the literature review, it is evident that managing all library resources for everyone within the institution is difficult, particularly in Bihar, a backward state in India. India itself is a developing country where people struggle to access up-to-date resources from reputable publishers because many such libraries operate on limited budgets. It is a harsh reality that subscribing to good journals, academic tools, and other e-resources is not easy within such constraints. Science is the examination of how policies are made to manage library services to maximise utilisation, while working within limited budgets and resources.

3. Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the working hours of the library of the Government medical colleges of Bihar.
2. To find out the collection of print and electronic resources in the library of the Government Medical Colleges of Bihar.
3. To examine the collection development policy of the library of the Government Medical Colleges of Bihar.

4. Methodology

The study evaluated the libraries of government medical colleges under the Health Department of the Government of Bihar. The scope of the study was limited to 9 government medical colleges that are fully regulated and supported by the Government of Bihar and were established by 2020. The central library of each medical college has been included in the study. The list of selected government medical colleges is as follows:

Table 1. Government Medical Colleges of Bihar

S. No.	Government Medical Colleges (GMC)	Location	Estd. Year
	Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Medical College & Hospital (JNKTMCH)	Madhepura	2020
	Bhagwan Mahavir Institute of Medical Sciences (BMIMS)	Pawapuri	2011

	Government Medical College (GMC, Bettiah)	Bettiah, West Champaran	2008
	Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College and Hospital (JLNMCH)	Bhagalpur	1971
	Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital (SKMCH)	Muzaffarpur	1970
	Nalanda Medical College and Hospital (NMCH)	Patna	1970
	Anugrah Narayan Magadh Medical College and Hospital (ANMMCH)	Gaya	1969
	Darbhanga Medical College and Hospital (DMCH)	Darbhanga	1946
	Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH)	Patna	1925

The study evaluated the current status of resources and collections, as well as the collection development policies, at the selected Government Medical College in Bihar. A well-structured questionnaire was developed to collect the data. Every college has filled out a questionnaire, which was completed by their respective librarian/deputy librarian/in-charge librarian available at the time. To evaluate the data from 9 questionnaires, MS Excel and MS Word were used.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1. Government Medical College Libraries Working Hours

Government medical college libraries in Bihar generally operate from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, except on Sundays. These libraries offer extended access to students, faculty, and researchers, ensuring adequate time for study and reference. Some colleges also provide an e-library and 24/7 access to digital resources to support continuous learning.

Table 2. Government Medical College Libraries Working Hours

Government Medical College	Opening Hours			Closing Hours		
	Monday-Saturday	Sunday	Holidays	Monday-Saturday	Sunday	Holidays
ANMMCH	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	Closed	10:00 PM	10:00 PM	Closed
DMCH	10:00 AM	Closed	Closed	12:00 PM	Closed	Closed
GMC, Bettiah	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	10:00 PM	10:00 PM	10:00 PM
JNKTMC	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	Closed	8:00 PM	8:00 PM	Closed
JLNMCH	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	Closed	8:00 PM	8:00 PM	Closed
NMCH	8:00 AM	Closed	Closed	9:00 PM	Closed	Closed
PMCH	9:00 AM	Closed	Closed	9:00 PM	Closed	Closed
SKMCH	10:00 AM	10:00 AM	Closed	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Closed

BMIMS	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	9:00 PM	9:00 PM	9:00 PM
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Table 2 highlights that government Medical College libraries in Bihar are mostly open from Monday to Saturday. The ANMMCH, GMC and DMCH have the longest opening hours and the shortest opening hours are at SKMCH. The majority of libraries are closed except GMC Bettiah and BMIMS.

5.2. Reading Room Timing

The reading rooms in government medical college libraries in Bihar are typically open from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, providing a quiet, comfortable environment for students and faculty. Some institutions offer separate reading areas for faculty and students, and select colleges ensure round-the-clock access for exam preparation periods.

Table 3 Reading Room Timing

Government Medical Colleges	Time
ANMMCH	7:00 AM-10:00 PM
DMCH	10:00 AM-12:00 AM
GMC, Bettiah	8:00 AM- 10:00 PM
JNKTMCH	8:00 AM- 8:00 PM
JLNMCH	8:00 AM- 8:00 PM
NMCH	8:00 AM-9:00 PM
PMCH	9:00 AM- 5:00 PM
SKMCH	24 Hours
BMIMS (VIMS)	8:00 AM-9:00 PM

It is observed from Table 3 that the hours of the reading room are not uniform in different Government Medical Colleges of Bihar. The majority of the reading rooms are kept open from morning to evening. SKMCH offers the longest access time (24 hours) and ANMMCH is the second longest access time (7:00 AM to 10:00 PM). By comparison, PMCH has the shortest hours of reading room access.

5.3. Issue-Return Timing

The issue-return timing in government medical college libraries of Bihar is usually between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM on working days. This schedule ensures smooth circulation of books, allowing students and faculty to borrow and return resources efficiently.

Table 4 Issue- Return Timing

Government Medical Colleges	Time
ANMMCH	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

DMCH	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
GMC, Bettiah	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
JNKTMCH	11:00 AM - 4:30 PM
JLNMCH	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
NMCH	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
PMCH	9:00 AM - 9:00 PM
SKMCH	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
BMIMS (VIMS)	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

From Table 4 it is evident that the book issue and return timing is similar in most Government Medical College libraries of Bihar ranging from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. PMCH's service hours are the longest (9:00 AM to 9:00 PM), while the hours of JNKTMCH are shorter (11:00 AM to 4:30 PM).

5.4. Total Print Collections of the Library

The Government Medical Colleges in Bihar have significant print libraries to facilitate teaching, learning and research. 5000-7500 books are found in most libraries, and at DMCH and BMIMS (VIMS) the volume is much higher than 7500. These collections primarily include medical books, reference works, and paramedical books key to the education of students in medical and paramedical careers, along with journal articles and test preparation books.

Table 5 reveals that there are significant differences in the print collection of Government Medical College libraries in Bihar. DMCH has the largest holdings of books/monographs and theses/dissertations, and ANMMCH is the only library that holds print versions of journals and has research papers and manuscripts. The number of newspapers in SKMCH is the highest. Publications of the Government can only be found in ANMMCH, JNKTMCH and SKMCH. Gaps in specialised information resources are shown by the absence of project reports, patents/standards, maps/charts/diagrams and annual reports within a library.

Table 5 Total Print Collections of the Library

Government Medical Colleges	Books/ Monographs	Print Journal/ Periodicals	Magazines	Newspapers	Bound Volumes	Reference Sources	Theses & Dissertation	Project Report	Annual Report	Research Paper	Govt. Publication	Manuscript	Pamphlets/ Handouts	Patents/ Standards	Maps/ Charts/ Diagram
ANMMCH	18299	12561	-	3	-	-	30	-	-	85	12	200	47	-	-
DMCH	39000	6240	-	5	-	270	2500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GMC, Bettiah	8939	619	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
JNKTMCH	6500	1285	-	4	-	200	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
JLNMCH	29519	4454	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NMCH	26582	1239	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PMCH	23623	598	-	2	-	-	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SKMCH	29136	172	-	7	-	-	200	-	-	-	99	-	-	-	-
BMIMS (VIMS)	7394	135	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Total Collections of E-Resources

Table 6 Total Collections of E-Resources

Government Medical Colleges	E-Books	E- Journal	E-Journal, current publisher-wise	E-Journal Archives	E-Journal Current A-Z list	Full-Text Database	Bibliographic Database	Online Databases	E-Theses and Dissertations	E-Reference Sources	Open Access Resources	Audio-Visual Record	CD/ DVD	Institutional/ Digital Repository	Any others
ANMMCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-
DMCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	-	-
GMC, Bettiah	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-
JNKTMCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
JLNMCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-
NMCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PMCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	-	-
SKMCH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BMIMS (VIMS)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-

As shown in Table 6, the electronic resources available in the Government Medical College libraries are very limited, and the main electronic resource is CD/DVD. PMCH has the largest collection (150 CDs/DVDs), followed by ANMMCH, JLNMMCH and BMIMS (100 each). DMCH has 80 CDs/DVDs, GMC has 50 CDs/DVDs, while JNKTMCH and SKMCH have no e-resources. There was no data in the other e-resource categories, indicating either that these resources are unavailable or that data were not reported.

5.5. Adequacy of collection of library resources

The library resources in Bihar's government medical colleges are generally adequate, covering core medical subjects and updated editions. However, continuous additions and digital integration are needed to fully meet evolving academic and research demands.

Table 7 Adequacy of collection of library resources

Government Medical Colleges	YES	NO
ANMMCH	-	✓
DMCH	-	✓
GMC, Bettiah	-	✓
JNKTMCH	-	✓
JLNMMCH	-	✓
NMCH	-	✓
PMCH	✓	-
SKMCH	-	✓
BMIMS (VIMS)	-	✓

Table 7 shows that out of nine Government Medical College libraries, eight were found to be inadequate in terms of resources to satisfy user needs. The resources and library support at PMCH are adequate, indicating comparatively better availability of resources and library support.

5.6. Collection Development of Information Resources in Future

Future collection development should focus on expanding digital resources, updating print materials, subscribing to reputable databases, and aligning acquisitions with curriculum and research needs.

Table 8 Collection Development of Information Resources in Future

Government Medical Colleges	Print	E-resources	Both
ANMMCH	-	-	✓
DMCH	-	-	✓
GMC, Bettiah	-	-	✓

JNKTMCH	-	-	✓
JLNMCH	-	-	✓
NMCH	-	-	✓
PMCH	-	-	✓
SKMCH	-	-	✓
BMIMS (VIMS)	-	-	✓

Table 8 explores colleges' preferences for developing their library collections in the future. All nine govt. Medical colleges have opted for a combined approach of expanding both print and e-resources in their libraries.

5.7. Library Collection Development Policy

Table 9 Library Collection Development Policy

Government Medical Colleges	Yes /No
ANMMCH	Yes
DMCH	No
GMC, Bettiah	No
JNKTMCH	No
JLNMCH	Yes
NMCH	Yes
PMCH	Yes
SKMCH	No
BMIMS (VIMS)	Yes

Table 9 demonstrates that ANMMCH, JLNMCH, NMCH, PMCH, and BMIMS (VIMS) have collection development policies, indicating a systematic approach to acquiring and managing resources. The other colleges, namely DMCH, GMC Bettiah, JNKTMCH, and SKMCH, have not adopted such a policy, which can affect the systematic development of their library collections.

5.8. Format of Library Collection Development Policy

The library collection development policy guides the selection, acquisition, evaluation, and maintenance of resources. It ensures that the collection meets the academic, research, and clinical needs of students, faculty, and healthcare professionals.

Table 10 Format of Library Collection Development Policy

Government Medical Colleges	Written	Unwritten
ANMMCH	✓	-
DMCH	-	-
GMC, Bettiah	-	-
JNKTMCH	-	-
JLNMCH	✓	-
NMCH	✓	-
PMCH	✓	-
SKMCH	-	-
BMIMS (VIMS)	✓	-

Table 10 reveals that ANMMCH, JLNMCH, NMCH, PMCH, and BMIMS (VIMS) have written collection development policies that ensure systematic and transparent library resource management. There is no college with a collection development policy, and none of the colleges is based on unwritten policies at DMCH, GMC Bettiah, JNKTMCH and SKMCH.

5.9. Type of Library Collection Development Policy

Government medical college libraries in Bihar follow a need-based, curriculum-oriented collection development policy, focusing on acquiring relevant, up-to-date, and evidence-based resources in both print and electronic formats.

Table 11 Type of Library Collection Development Policy

Government Medical Colleges	Outline Form	Short Summary Form	Full-fledge Form	Others
ANMMCH	-	-	✓	-
DMCH	-	-	-	-
GMC, Bettiah	-	-	-	-
JNKTMCH	-	-	-	-
JLNMCH	✓	-	-	-
NMCH	-	-	✓	-
PMCH	-	-	✓	-
SKMCH	-	-	-	-
BMIMS (VIMS)	-	-	✓	-

Table 11 indicates that the collection development policy is outlined at JLNMMCH and fully formed at ANMMCH, NMCH, PMCH, and BMIMS (VIMS), demonstrating a more detailed approach to collection development. None of the colleges reported having policies in a short summary or other format.

5.10. Collection Development Policy for Electronic Information Sources

Table 12 Collection Development Policy for Electronic Information Sources

Government Medical Colleges	Yes/ No
ANMMCH	Yes
DMCH	No
GMC, Bettiah	No
JNKTMCH	No
JLNMMCH	Yes
NMCH	Yes
PMCH	Yes
SKMCH	No
BMIMS (VIMS)	Yes

Table 12 shows whether electronic information sources in libraries are developed in accordance with a collection development policy. ANMMCH, JLNMMCH, NMCH, PMCH, and BMIMS (VIMS) are the only 5 of the 9 government medical colleges that follow a collection development policy for electronic information sources.

5.11. Digital Collection Policy of the Library

The collection development policy for electronic information sources emphasises relevance, accessibility, licensing, and cost-effectiveness, ensuring alignment with academic needs and promoting access to high-quality digital medical resources.

Table 13 Digital Collection Policy of the Library

Government Medical Colleges	Yes/ No
ANMMCH	No
DMCH	No
GMC, Bettiah	No
JNKTMCH	No
JLNMMCH	No

NMCH	No
PMCH	No
SKMCH	No
BMIMS (VIMS)	No

Table 13 reveals that none of the Government Medical College libraries in Bihar has a formal digital collection policy. This indicates a lack of structured planning and management of digital resources that can affect the effective development and use of digital collections.

5.13. Collection Development of Digital Information Resources in Future

Future collection development of digital information resources should focus on expanding access to e-books, e-journals, medical databases, and cloud-based platforms, ensuring remote access, regular updates, and alignment with academic and research needs.

Table 14 Collection Development of Digital Information Resources in Future

Government Medical Colleges	Yes/No
ANMMCH	Yes
DMCH	Yes
GMC, Bettiah	Yes
JNKTMCH	Yes
JLNMCH	Yes
NMCH	Yes
PMCH	Yes
SKMCH	Yes
BMIMS (VIMS)	Yes

As shown in Table 14, all Government Medical College libraries of Bihar are planning for the future development of their information resources. This reflects a positive commitment to improving collections, services, and infrastructure to adapt to changing user and academic needs.

6. Findings of the Study

1. Most of the libraries are open from Monday to Saturday. The libraries at DMCH, NMCH, and PMCH are open on Sunday as well. The libraries are closed on holidays, except for GMC, Bettiah, and BMIMS, which remain open on holidays also. The number of hours libraries stay open varies by college, with the SKMCH library having the fewest working hours per day.
2. The reading room in the SKMCH library is open 24 hours per day, and the ANMMCH library has the second-longest reading room access time (7:00 AM to 10:00 PM). In the meantime, access to the reading room in the PMCH library is the shortest.
3. The timing of issuing and returning the books has similar timings for most of the colleges, i.e., 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. PMCH, on the other hand, provides the longest issue-return hours, from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM.

4. DMCH has the most extensive collections of books/ manuscripts and theses/ dissertations. ANMCH has the highest number of journal holdings.
5. The electronic resources available in libraries are only on CD/DVD. PMCH has the largest collection of CDs/DVDs, i.e., 150. While JNKTMCH and SKMCH do not have any electronic resources.
6. PMCH is the only college out of the nine Government Medical Colleges whose library is adequate, while the rest of the eight colleges are inadequate to meet users' needs in terms of their library resources.
7. All nine Government Medical Colleges have chosen to develop their libraries' print and electronic collections simultaneously.
8. Only five colleges, ANMMCH, JLNLMCH, NMCH, PMCH and BMIMS (VIMS) have a collection development policy in their library.
9. The library collection development policies of ANMMCH, JLNLMCH, NMCH, PMCH, and BMIMS (VIMS) have been in written format.
10. The library collection development policy of ANMMCH, NMCH, PMCH and BMIMS (VIMS) is in a detailed, comprehensive form. While JLNLMCH has its policies in outline form.
11. ANMMCH, JLNLMCH, NMCH, PMCH, and BMIMS (VIMS) follow a collection development policy for electronic information sources.
12. A formal digital collection policy was not reported by any of the colleges.
13. All nine Government Medical College libraries are planning for the future development of their information resources.

7. Conclusion of the Study

The research aimed to evaluate the library collections and collection development policies of the nine Government Medical College libraries in Bihar. The research was conducted using a survey method and was participated in by the respective librarian/deputy librarian/in-charge librarian of each library available at the time. The collected data and their analysis indicate that major improvements are needed in these libraries. The majority of libraries do not have a variety of printed and electronic resources for the users. The libraries' collection development policies are also poorly structured and written, and even some libraries lack them. To improve the condition of these government medical colleges' libraries, the government authority should establish a state-level committee for medical libraries to monitor, evaluate, and provide guidance on their improvement. All medical colleges must follow the same library policies, which are enforced by the Government Medical Colleges.

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