

Stock Verification

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Today all libraries are following open access system to promote their materials, due to open access system there are some chances of missing and replacement of books in the libraries. 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 an opportunity for cleaning and changing the 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.

Advantages of Stock Verification

Stock verification helps in:

- Identification of lost books in a library.
- Opportunity to staff to get more acquaintance with library collection.
- Identification of titles needing repair/replacement, etc.
- Identification of titles fit for discarding.
- Help rectification of record such as catalogue, shelf list regarding missing books.
- Identification of titles in need of tag, due date slip, book card replacement.
- Understanding effectiveness of library security system.
- Through dusting of shelves and cleaning of books.

Disadvantages of Stock Verification

- Stock verification is a lengthy process, therefore, the library remains closed for a long period.
- Patrons are required to return books borrowed from the library.
- Accumulation of work in acquisition, technical processing sections since the staff is deputed for stock taking.

- Despite the best possible security system, no library can claim zero loss of books.
- Staff time is wasted in futile activity.

Usually there are three techniques for library stock verification

- i. Manual– this is without help of computers and only with staff involvement.
- ii. Semi-automated– partial use of computers.
- iii. Automated - completely with the help of a Library Management Software.

Given below are some methods of stock verification

Stock Verification with Accession Register

A team of two persons is constituted to carry verification. One Person reads the accession number loudly; the person holding the register locates the number and puts a tick mark on the number, preferably, with pencil. This process is carried out through all the stacks holding library collection. On completion of the round on the books in the stacks, similar checking is done with issue record at the circulation desk as well as with the list of books sent for binding. The next step is to prepare a list of titles not ticked in the register.

Dummy of Accession Register

To save the original accession register from getting worn out with cutting and marking stock verification is carried out with a dummy of the accession register. A plain register with serial numbers printed in columns on each page is used for stock verification. The team proceeds with register to the shelves and one person speaks accession number of the book and the other person tick marks the relevant number in the register. The whole process is Repeated as explained above. Next all left out numbers are checked with the accession register to get the bibliographic details for the missing numbers.

Stock Verification with Book Card

The method needs formation of two teams to carry out the work. One team collects book cards from books and arranges them by serial order of the accession number on the cards. The second team tick marks the relevant accession number in the register and replaces the card in the books after they are re-arranged in classified order. The entire collection is

verified and at the completion of checking the list of missing books is prepared from the accession register.

Numerical Counting Method

The simplest method of stock verification is to count the total collection available in the library, add to it the books out on loan and with the binder together with books awaiting processing and compare the figures with the number of book in the accession register. The difference will be the number of missing books.

Stock Verification with Shelf list/card

Shelf list is an additional catalogue of collection which is arranged and kept in exact parallel way of books in the library, sequence wise as well as shelf wise. The work of stock verification is done by a team of two persons. One person tells the accession number and the other person shall raise the corresponding card in the tray. In this method more than one team can function simultaneously, each taking up one sequence for the checking work. On completion of the checking work a list of missing books shall be prepared with the help of cards which have remained in the tray unturned.

Sample Stock Verification

Sample stock verification is carried out to get an idea of the vigilance system of the library. One may choose one of those subject areas which are more prone to mischief such as fiction, art books or music score. Any one of the various methods of verification may be adopted for this purpose. If the result shows more than normal loss total verification may be taken up.

Stock verification using Library Management Softwares

Some of the library management softwares provided the facility to take the stock of the libraries using the database of library documents. The staffs of the libraries have to enter the accession numbers of the books available in the shelves using different nodes of the computer networked system. The softwares can automatically include the books on circulation also. Final list of the missing books will be generated from the system.

Stock verification using RFID Technology

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is a new generation of Auto Identification and data collection technology, which helps to automate the library and allows identification of large number of tagged objects like books, using radio waves. The RFID tags, are placed in books and covered with a property sticker. As the accession number of a book is unique it was chosen to identify the RFID tags of the books. RFID based Wi-Fi handheld inventory reader for capturing the Accession number of book available on shelves at the time of stock verification. The data is captured very quickly and accurately from the RFID tagged books. While scanning the tag affixed in books and documents in client software installed in computers receives the data as per the order of scanning. The data transferred to the PC is saved in a data file. And the file is moved to suitable computer program for processing and the list of missing books will be identified. After many cross checking the final verification report is prepared by the computers. The Wi-Fi handheld inventory reader can also be used to search an item and detect misplaced documents.

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