

## On curbing the menace of remainder books in higher education

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This study attempts to present the library's and librarian's view point of dealing with remainder books and sensitise librarians and researchers about the trade in remainder books which enter the market disguised as genuine books and sold as such despite instructions from government, trade agencies and libraries about selling remainders. Based on the available literature on the trade of remainder books, a case study has been attempted in the light of the book acquisition activity of one year for a University Library. Since there is no explicit declaration from booksellers about which titles they supply are remainders, libraries have to resort to indirect options to identify them. It has been observed that over 80% of the books procured in a typical higher education library in the country are in English language. Of these, though 51% of books are either printed in India or priced in Indian Rupees, the remaining 49% of books have prices in foreign currencies. Out of a panel of over 50 book suppliers involved in supplying books of interest to the said Library, it was found that 12 suppliers actively canvassed for more number of books through frequent visits, providing large number of titles on approval for examination and through continuous interactions with teachers. Around 76% of the money spent for purchasing books is canvassed by these 12 suppliers for supplying 51% of the books procured. They supplied 2559 titles in English priced in foreign currencies (around 76% of such cases); out of which 68% only are published in the last four years. It was confirmed that over 32% of the procured books priced in foreign currencies are published at least four years before the year of purchase and some or many of these titles might have entered the country through the remainder route. The publisher never informs libraries about throwing a particular title in the remainder market. Similarly the importer/distributor/bookseller never certifies about the receipt of such a title through that route. It has also been observed that documents to support a remainder title being procured as genuine are made overnight by trade parties as per the demands of individual libraries. Due to the lack of actual data concerning remainder books in the country which the importers, distributors, booksellers and other entities are trying to closely guard from public and libraries, there are not many studies on remainder books deterrent measures to be taken by libraries which is adversely impacting the quality of book collection in libraries.

**Keywords:** book acquisition; remainder books, higher education libraries

### Introduction

India occupies a special position in the book trade not only as a large consumer of international books, especially in English, in the developing world but also probably as a major publisher of English language books other than USA and UK<sup>1</sup>. The large number of educational and research institutions consume considerable number of international publications in the form of books, journals and their various other manifestations in electronic and new media. With most academic books being expensive and beyond the purchasing power of individual buyers, the readers explore the availability of books in libraries, especially the academic and research libraries. While libraries have the responsibility of buying books, institutional buying incurs public money and libraries have to ensure the genuineness of each book purchased and correctness of every bill processed. Remainder books accounted for some 40 per cent of

the total book imports by India of Rs. 1,200 crore<sup>2</sup>. Thus it is necessary for libraries to devise infallible options for dealing with this dominant offshoot or even menace of the book trade.

A remaindered book doesn't imply that its quality is poor as sometimes good books also get remaindered. Maybe the book did not achieve the desired sale in the immediate year of its launch that prompted the publisher to mark it as remaindered. Though there may be some good books among reminders there are many others which may not be that good as pointed out by Arya that remaindered books are "high on effect and low on substance" and "sincere on-the-fringes readers get put off by reading such books and actually lower their book buying"<sup>3</sup>. The devaluation of the rupee has been beneficial to book importers and libraries demand an investigation into the operations of the book trade<sup>4</sup>. The interrelation of author, publisher, bookseller

and librarian in the book trade with a designated role of each is essential for building responsive library collections<sup>5</sup>.

This paper only attempts to counter the greediness of the trade in profiteering through pilfered sales. If the trade parties declare a remainder book so and supply it to an interested library at high discount, it may help a developing country like India with building a good collection by identifying the gems among the remaindered in a cost effective manner.

### Remainder books

Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines one of the meanings of the noun 'remainder' as copy of a book left unsold when demand has fallen and verb 'remainder' as dispose of (a book left unsold) at a reduced price<sup>6</sup>. This definition is very obvious and stamping a book as remainder is to bring some revenue option to publishers from unpopular and unsold books. Such books are designated as remainders, remainder books, remaindered books etc. The term 'remainder' is used in this study due to frequent use of the same in India. When a publisher remaindered a book, it takes a heavy loss, but at least it earns something and clears out valuable warehouse space<sup>7</sup>. A remainder book with a retail price of \$19.95 is likely to be acquired for as little as \$1, and sold in stores for \$5<sup>7</sup>. This implies that a remainder may be procured for as low as 5% of the price and hence the interest of book trade to deal with it. A publisher has printed more books than sold and are discounting what sat in the warehouse which are in pristine condition to "remainder houses" who bid on large quantities and re-offer them in discounted form to bookstores<sup>8</sup>. Remainder books are the difference between what a publisher printed and what was sold<sup>9</sup>. Remaindering is selling the books at a loss, to recoup printing and shipping costs<sup>10</sup>. If there are large quantities of a book on hand which are not selling at an acceptable pace, at some point the cost of storing a book is more than the book's worth to the publisher which leads to remaindering the book<sup>11</sup>.

Prakash rightly states the reason for a book to become remainder is the publisher's expectation from the book was much higher than the actual demand and resulted in overstocking of a title. Publishers are anxious to overstock a book expecting huge sales and subsequently remaindering it on poor buyer response. Publishers also get some reprieve as "publishing contracts often have a clause that remaindered books will not garner royalties"<sup>12</sup>.

Nawotka mentions about remainder specific book shows such as Chicago's CIROBE, the UK's CIANA and Atlanta's Spring Book Show whereas India is yet to witness such events<sup>13</sup>. Wikipedia states Edward Hamilton first and later Daedulus dominated the remainder trade which are still significant, but the internet and especially Amazon.com's used book sales have greatly impacted the market.

Also not all books offered to a remainder house (a firm specialising in remainder market) will be bought as they'll only buy those which they think they can profitably sell and the remaining are pulped<sup>11</sup>. May illustrates three further categories of bargain books other than reminders<sup>8</sup>:

Hurts or returns: A "returned book" exists primarily due to the policy of guaranteed sales. Publishers give distributors and/or bookstores the right to return books that are not sold. Those returned are considered "hurt" and thrown into cardboard boxes or Gaylords which will be sold at 85-95% off of publisher's retail price.

Promotional books: These are books with a high perceived value and often retailed at a price lower than the suggested retail price. Although it was never sold at the higher price, the consumer perceives it as an exceptionally nice bargain.

White sales: These are books that publishers wish to keep on backlist but want to reduce their inventory. Thus they may offer a one-time "white sale" by offering an extra 25% discount.

### India and remainder market

It appears that all these different categories land in the country in the guise of remainder books. Interactions with acquaintances in the book trade revealed about other informal sources of books getting accumulated and brought to the country as remainders:

1. Complimentary and review copies: The complimentary and review copies that researchers and teachers in universities in developed countries discard are sourced by specialist intermediaries and brought into India.
2. Scrap-buyers: The second hand book trade in many places in the country is banking up on scrap buyers to source books of interest. A similar mechanism of devious intermediaries is suspected to be active in developed countries to feed the book market of developing countries.
3. Auctions from book fairs, closed book shops, warehouse clearing etc.: It is believed that some

Indian participants to the International Book Fairs, at the close of the Fairs, buy out the left out stock brought by the publishers for display, who considering the logistics and high costs involved in taking them back sell it to local market at a very low price.

Arya rightly sketched the life cycle of remainder books and its India connection in unequivocal terms. Since warehousing and distribution facilities in developed countries like the US and UK are outsourced, it begins costing the publisher a considerable amount of money to keep a book in stock whose local sales are negligible<sup>3</sup>. This forces the publisher to “remainder the book, which essentially means that he invites glorified kabadiwalas (scrap-buyers) from countries like India and offers them such stock at throwaway prices”.

Indian publishers never send their books to the remainder market due to limited number of copies they print, poor demand in international markets, comparatively economical warehousing costs and good margins that are given to the booksellers who make these books reach different corners of the country where higher education libraries with limited budget are eager to consume these books.

### **Remainder as a menace for libraries**

Like special offers and discounted sales in other trades, economic options to buy and own books prevail and that is quite reasonable. In some countries remainder books are sold so and there are companies specialising in this area. The Thor Power Tool Company v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue decision of 1979 in the United States reflects the adverse effects on keeping inventories for several years with many unsold books being burned or recycled into paper or cardboard instead of being sold at a large reduction<sup>14</sup>. Whereas in India, remainder books are never sold so and instead a major chunk of them enter libraries in the guise of genuine books with importers, distributors and book sellers pocketing huge profit. And that is the main reason why professionals and libraries have to be more vigilant while dealing with such books.

When the Good Offices Committee (GOC) had membership of libraries and library associations, in the terms of supply, there was a mention of “the discount on remaindered titles will be 30% of the published prices and should be charged through separate invoices”. This rate was suggested at a time

when normal books other than short/no discount titles and Government publications were offered to libraries at a uniform discount of 10%. In recent years when the GOC had become a unilateral body of trade, the same clause finds no mention in the GOC circulars. They use the word remainder in the declaration in the bill that “only latest editions have been supplied and these are not remainder titles”<sup>15</sup>. This shows the general psyche of distributors and book sellers in the country towards the menace of remaindered books. It appears that they want to abolish the term ‘remainder’ from the library psyche. A book supplier or distributor can still deal with remainder books by submitting a false declaration. Ideally, if they declare a remainder title so and offer a higher discount to libraries, no doubt libraries are going to benefit by acquiring at least good titles among remainders in a cost effective manner.

### **Limitations of the study**

It is difficult for libraries to identify remainders due to the lack of channels available to gather the information regarding the same available exclusively for the book trade. Neither the publisher informs about throwing of a particular title in the remainder market nor the importer/distributor/bookseller certify about the receipt of such a title through that route. Documents to support a remainder title being procured as genuine are made overnight by trade parties as per the demands of individual libraries.

This study attempts to present the library’s version of dealing with remainder books. Since there is no direct communication possible and available from publishers about which titles are transferred to the remainder market and there is no explicit declaration from booksellers about which titles they supply are remainders, libraries have to resort to wild guesses about which titles are remainders. Some such indirect options are:

1. Older titles which are published 4-5 years or still older before the year of purchase;
2. Titles from uncommon or rare publishers;
3. Few titles from a publisher are canvassed for and the supplier expresses difficulty in arranging for some other title by the same publisher; and
4. Titles which are repeatedly pushed for and aggressively canvassed for by book suppliers.

### **The case study**

The book acquisition activity of one year for a University Library in the country is presented in

Table 1. It has been observed that over 80% of the books procured are in English language. Of these, though 51% of books are either printed in India or priced in Indian Rupees, the remaining 49% of books required more amount of money to procure them considering their price in foreign currencies.

The Library procures only those books recommended by teachers for the various teaching, learning and research activities of the University. With teachers getting too busy with various academic activities, they get hardly any time to identify titles on their own. Another reason is the biased reviews and promotional material prompting teachers never to recommend a book before physically inspecting the contents, coverage and style of treatment of subject matter. It may not always possible for them to visit local bookshops for identifying titles of interest. Though library receives some recommendations for those books identified by teachers on their own, a large number of books are recommended from those brought by the panel of suppliers for physical examination on approval basis.

Out of a panel of over 50 book suppliers involved in supplying books of interest for the Library, it was found that 12 suppliers actively canvassed for more number of books through frequent visits, providing large number of titles on approval for examination and through continuous interactions with teachers. Around 76% of the money spent for purchasing books is canvassed by these 12 suppliers for supplying 51% of the books procured. They supplied 2559 titles in English priced in foreign currencies (around 76% of such cases); out of which 68% only are published in the last four years.

Table 2 highlights new titles in those priced in foreign currencies supplied by the major suppliers. Suppliers 11, 2, 8 and 1 supplied more number of newly published titles whereas suppliers 6, 4, 9, 3, 12 and 7 supplied comparatively large number of older titles. It was confirmed that over 32% of the procured books priced in foreign currencies are published at least four years before the year of purchase and may be a substantial number of these titles have entered the country through the remainder route. If “books in

Table 1—Book Acquisition Activity in a University Library

Books Purchased in the financial year 2011-2012	8411
Books in English	6872
Books in Indian Languages	1539
Books in English priced in Indian Rupees (₹)	3500
Books in English priced in foreign currencies	3372
Cost of purchasing 8411 books	₹ 1.56 crore
Books supplied by 12 major book suppliers	4282 (50.91%)
Percentage of budget spent for purchasing 4282 titles	75.96%
Books in English priced in foreign currencies supplied by 12 major book suppliers	2559 (75.89% of 3372)
Books in English priced in foreign currencies published during 2009-2012	2287 (67.82% of 3372)
Books in English priced in foreign currencies published up to 2008	1085 (32.18% of 3372)

Table 2—Percentage of new titles supplied by major suppliers

Supplier	Number of books supplied for publication years				% of (B+C+D) to A	Total Books Supplied
	2012-2009 (A)	2008-2005 (B)	2004-2000 (C)	1999 & older (D)		
Supplier 1	192	32	4	5	21.35	233
Supplier 2	284	12	1	0	4.58	297
Supplier 3	199	95	47	25	83.92	366
Supplier 4	125	117	51	24	153.60	317
Supplier 5	146	30	16	13	40.41	205
Supplier 6	51	42	66	13	237.25	172
Supplier 7	116	27	27	21	64.66	191
Supplier 8	197	25	3	1	14.72	226
Supplier 9	104	34	49	22	100.96	209
Supplier 10	111	39	10	9	52.25	169
Supplier 11	58	1	0	0	1.72	59
Supplier 12	68	16	25	6	69.12	115
Others	636	108	44	25	27.83	813
Total	2287	578	343	164	47.44	3372
%	67.82	17.14	10.17	4.86		100

the United States have been remaindered much earlier and in greater quantities” is considered, there may be some fraction of remainders in the 68% of new titles too<sup>14</sup>. The case study also hence support Padmanabhan’s estimate of 40% remainders among total book imports by considering remainders among recent titles too<sup>2</sup>. This thus explains the much needed vigil that is required on the part of libraries to deal with the menace of remainders entering libraries as genuinely imported books.

### **Reasons for surge in remainders**

The remainder trade in the country is almost worth Rs. 500 crore (5 billion)<sup>2</sup>. Also the rising number of importers, distributors and booksellers coupled with a large number of libraries as customers indicate a natural surge in this trade in the country considering the following.

#### **Seeking higher discount**

Education as a major activity in the country and the increasing entry of private players in education has seen educational institutions and its libraries seeking higher discount for books purchased. Private institutions on the one hand give increasing emphasis to constructing buildings and other tangible infrastructure to lure students and they have an intrinsic interest to develop a well stocked library in a cost effective manner and this can be achieved by seeking more discount than what is offered to Government funded institutions. Apart from this, these institutions also collect money from students for distributing course related books which they buy in bulk from publishers and booksellers at huge margins. Both these dictated private institutions to always negotiate and seek the highest discount possible and best prices achievable for whatever books they purchased. Some of the teachers and administrators from Government institutions go on a sabbatical to these private institutions and after experiencing higher discount regime there, they wanted to explore and replicate the same in Government funded institutions also. Also howsoever well funded an institution is, the availability of more and more good publications in one’s field of interest always justified any possibility of obtaining best discount terms in library purchase for cost effective as well as optimal collection development. Thus many big libraries attached to Government funded institutions are slowly moving from a 10% discount plus GOC based exchange rate

purchase system to a variable discount plus bank exchange rate based purchase regime.

A perusal of import invoices from major publishers revealed that publishers offer up to a maximum of 45-50% discount to importers generally though further discount is possible in rare cases. In some cases and with some publishers, the discount offered is still lower. Many distributors do not sell directly to libraries and hence library supply has to be executed through booksellers who get books at a lower rate as every importer maintains their cut in each deal. Though the General Financial Rules (GFR) of Government of India has excluded books, publications, periodicals, etc., for a library from the purview of goods in its Rule 136, some institutions still resort to tendering for identifying highest discount for purchasing library books and journals<sup>16</sup>. This has prompted some distributors and sellers to quote unrealistic discount than possible under market conditions which may be accommodated by resorting to mixing remainders with books arrived through normal channels to sustain the higher discount offered. There are also many cases of non supply of large number of titles ordered as the suppliers who quoted huge discounts are unable to supply the same at such margins. In another way, the unrealistic discount sought by libraries is encouraging traders to deal with remainders and it is high time for libraries to rethink and avoid stipulating higher discount which the genuine trade parties are unable to bear. High discounts may also deter the entry of new, latest, demanding and relevant titles from premier publishers to the library.

#### **Plethora of price certificates**

Very few publishers print the price of a book in the book. Most publishers are of the habit of revising their prices annually, semi-annually, quarterly, monthly, or at odd intervals to recover warehousing and operating costs. In the pre-internet/web era, a publisher has to wait for long interval to print a catalogue or price list to revise the price of a book. With the web dominated sale arena of today, it is easy for publishers to revise the price at any convenient time they deem fit. To resolve the price issues quickly and in accepting ordered books in a faster manner, some libraries consider the price information on the publisher’s website as the authentic price, but this may put the library at a disadvantage about authenticity of the price charged. This leads

distributors and suppliers to claim higher price for a book sourced at lower price by providing a copy of the revised price list/web page from the publisher. In cases where the publishers have reduced the price of a book, they may bring the old purchase invoice to claim higher charges which provides the suppliers with a win-win situation turning libraries always losers in the deal. If a supplier has remainders and he can still claim higher price by providing a copy of the old purchase invoice, even to another party, or using a printout from the website. Trade parties always express difficulties to submit originals of such invoices. Since book trade is flourished with multiple players with one company functioning simultaneously as a book importer, distributor and even supplier to libraries, it is often easy to thrust libraries with third party purchase invoices. Considering the plethora of documents flashed at libraries as price proof to support the invoices submitted, it is quite easy to cook up some document for a remainder book also. This has given enough confidence and courage to trade parties for supply of remainders as originals or mix them with originals.

#### **Exclusive titles**

With publishing getting more commercialised by large scale mergers and finance and banking conglomerates buying or allying with pristine names in publishing, the orientation and emphasis of these companies are more on market capitulation and maximising profit. Sometimes, it is common for a book importer/distributor/seller to clinch a deal by working out an exclusive price much lower than the publisher price guaranteeing enhanced sales or by importing copies in bulk. In such cases, the importer is unwilling to show the invoice received. Libraries have very little information about which title is exclusive with whom. It has become more common now for a bookseller to furnish alternate documents as price proof by seeking excuses of a particular title being exclusive with some distributor. May be some of these titles have arrived as remainders.

#### **Local offices doubling as price certificate issuers**

The country is also witnessing opening of local offices by multinational publishers for business promotion and networking. Many such local offices issue price certificates of titles as per the wishes of trade without verifying price at which the titles are imported or are they arrived through the grey market as remainders. Since many libraries accept

supplementary and third party documents, it will be difficult for a library which wants to restrict such counterfeit documents. Thus a national collective action plan of libraries is required to effectively deal with and curb the menace of remainders. Ideally local offices of publishers may help libraries by alerting about which of their titles are sent to remainder market so that library can take ample care about avoiding purchase of those titles under normal terms and conditions of purchase.

#### **Mushrooming of book suppliers**

The state of affairs has currently come to such a level that anyone can start a bookselling business to libraries in the country. It is a common trend for representatives or employees of distributors, importers and booksellers to start their own firms due to the poor salary they receive and service conditions they have to bear with when they work for someone else. Such a mushrooming of traders somehow leads to acute competition among different players. Also only certain titles imported by major distributors and those available as remainders are the products available for each one to vie and compete. The worst part is having got excessive margins some suppliers bribe purchasers, causing rot to a system which ought to be a pure facilitator of knowledge<sup>3</sup>. Inducements of complementary copies to indenters may also be happening to seek purchase recommendations for remainders.

#### **Options for tackling remainders**

There are no direct channels available for libraries to receive prior intimation regarding which titles are available in the remainder market and out of which, currently which ones have entered the country through that route. Hence libraries have to resort to various indirect means to tackle the menace of remainders entering libraries in the guise of genuinely imported books.

#### **Discouraging purchase of old books**

It is evident that the chances of reminders entering a library are more due to delayed purchases or the practice of buying books published during earlier years in a succeeding year. If the book concerned is of interest to very few patrons and is of research level, the library should discourage buying such books. Instead, they may be sourced on interlibrary loan from other libraries or through a collaborative library network. Such a service is very successfully operated

for the last few years by the DELNET which almost has a national reach. Only text books and books demanded simultaneously by more number of patrons among old books may be considered for purchase. Avoiding purchase of old books to the maximum possible extent may also help in optimising the purchase of more and more new books.

#### **Sensitising users**

Books purchased to a large extent are recommended by senior users such as teachers and they are not very much aware of the menace of remainders. They give preference to the subject matter dealt in the books. Also the suppliers on panel visit them continuously to pursue and pester for collecting recommendations for books in their stock. Library staff may thus sensitise the indenters about the dangers of recommending remainder books and emphasise on identifying and selecting more fresh stock where the chances of arrival through the remainder route are low.

#### **Seeking alternate discount for old books**

Setting a reasonable discount for recently published books is worthwhile with some scope for modification in the case of older books. Teachers and researchers recommend books based on the suitability of content and many are also not very informed about the presence of remainders. To act as a deterrent against the torrent of remainders, libraries may fix a variable discount pattern in such a way that the discount claimed is more when the books become older; somewhere in the range of 50% (considering the cost of 5-15% for remainders and 10-20% for shipping plus a margin of 15-35%) for books older than 8-10 years. The only catch here is if an older book not available in the remainder market is recommended by a teacher, supplier may not be willing to supply the same. Such cases may be handled as exceptions and discount terms may be relaxed depending on the urgency of request, apart from the fact that the requisition was not generated out of books brought on approval but by the teacher through other means.

#### **Adopting purchase/import invoice from publisher as price proof**

To curb remainders, libraries have to independently and collectively resort to tough measures of fixing a genuine document as price proof, the purchase invoice from the original publisher. Though difficult to eliminate unfair trade practices altogether, but can

be prevented to some extent by always insisting for import invoice from the publisher. Adopting a tough stand of not accepting any title without this document may help the library to eliminate at least those cases where the supplier is unable to furnish this document. This may also help to weed out books brought to the country through doubtful means without proper import documents. Some suppliers make the remainder trade genuine by importing single copies of those titles again, if available from publisher, and circulate the import invoices thus received for selling remainders too. Some firms may bring older import invoices to justify the supply of remainders.

To overcome such unfair trade practices, publishers should mark copy number in all books (preferably on the back of title page) and print this number in the purchase invoice to eliminate any exploitation of one invoice for multiple deals by distributors/sellers/suppliers. It remains to be seen whether publishers evolve such customer/library friendly measures by creating much unhappiness to the trade fraternity.

#### **Invoking anti-dumping laws**

Remainder is no doubt a public loss for private good and hence hurting the national economy. Those who operate in this business pocket huge profits at the cause of local publishing at the same time hitting those who are genuine in the trade. Sometimes the huge profit they earn may kill the entire market so that they themselves find it difficult to survive and sustain in later years. A cheat can stay in business only as long as a better one enters the fray. The low cost imports of remainders are a setback to the local publishing industry and to the indigenous writers, illustrators and photographers by snatching away opportunities from local talent; a loss to the national economy as the book hasn't used local paper, printers or binders; a loss-loss situation for the country as book imports do not attract any excise or customs duty<sup>3</sup>.

Dumping of books should be regulated by customs laws (anti-dumping and countervailing duties) and not by using copyright law<sup>12</sup>. To counter the menace of remainders, Arya suggests the government should apply antidumping laws on book imports—any book which hasn't been published or reprinted in the same year as it is being imported shouldn't be allowed to enter Indian shores. He also prescribes no book should be allowed to be imported for less than 40 percent of its cover price, the same limit prescribed for export<sup>3</sup>.

**Print on Demand (POD)**

American Booksellers Association (ABA) had a membership of 4,500-5,000 once while it was dropped to somewhere around 1,700 as a result of “Big Box” chain retailers, online bookselling, and e-books eroding the independent book retailing business<sup>8</sup>. Publishers have over the last few years evolved a highly successful model for sale of e-journals to libraries individually and through consortia eliminating middle men to the maximum possible extent. This has not only brought economies of scale by maximising revenues and profits by minimising outflows (almost 50% of the cost of a print book is shared with trade partners by a publisher) and eliminating external entities through direct communication with clients. They know the difficulties of establishing such a direct link through the print route. Though there are wide and varied differences in the way a journal and book is used in a library, publishers are aggressively pushing for e-transformation for books also with the arrival of effective rights management systems and advanced technology tools. There are also increasing number of research level edited books published as a result of conferences and other academic events. Nobody reads such books on a cover to cover basis and individual articles are consumed more or less like those in a journal issue. Some libraries in India are taking advantage of e-books platforms of major publishers and aggregators though strong interest from more libraries and consortia is required to make e-books further acceptable and popular. Till that time, publishers are thinking about why not bring in advances in e-technology to print books by adopting POD or ‘print on demand’ for print books eliminating the huge costs of warehousing, marketing, distribution of surplus, eliminating returns and for curtailing remainders. Major international publishers are either adopting or on the verge of starting this mode for selling and printing books. Based on the confirmed orders for print books from different distributors, only the required number of copies are printed and shipped. Altogether adoption of POD by every publisher would eliminate remainders, but it remains to be seen whether the costs involved in printing small number of copies every time will be at the reach of small and medium publishers.

**Conclusion**

In the emerging digital era, there are some librarians who think that print is not of much

importance. At least for the time being, it has been observed and experienced that an e-library will survive better in a print rich library as an evolving hybrid library catering to various needs of a diverse clientele. Thus libraries have to continue their serious engagement with printed books at the same time taking maximum advantage of suitable e-products to satisfactorily and cost effectively supplement the information aspirations of their users.

Libraries in developing countries play a larger social, educational and cultural role in meeting the various educational, learning and research aspirations of citizens. Unlike individuals in developed countries who can afford to purchase books of interest, most people in developing countries cannot afford such a luxury. Thus library purchase serves a major gatekeeping role in what citizens should read. The prevailing rules attached to library purchases as majority of them are either attached to the Government or receives Government funding stipulate that every rupee spent is audited. Also the price of every book purchased is authenticated with supplementary documents as well as certification by the supplier. The various players in the trade, such as, importer, distributor, bookseller or publisher never inform libraries about whether a particular book is a remainder. And this leads to overcharging and supply of remainders as regularly imported books. Over 30% of the books priced in foreign currencies in a library are of older years and hence a substantial number of these titles may be remainders. Apart from this, there may be some fraction of remainders in the remaining 70% of new titles too. Around 40% of the book imports are estimated to be of remainder books. This thus explains the much needed vigilance required on the part of libraries to deal with the menace of remainders entering libraries as genuinely imported books. It is high time that remainders should be sold as such to save libraries and book trade in this country. Though remainders are a reality and not a mirage, it appears as such to the libraries due to the absence of direct communication regarding them from publishers on the one hand and greediness of diverse players in the multilayered structure of book trade on the other. The different options suggested in the paper for tackling remainders when adopted individually and collectively by the libraries should no doubt eliminate the entry of such stock to the maximum possible extent. Let all the stakeholders join hands to break the foundations of this dubious trade to usher in

a transparent and cost effective purchase regime for collection development in the fund starved and demand surplus libraries in developing countries.

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