

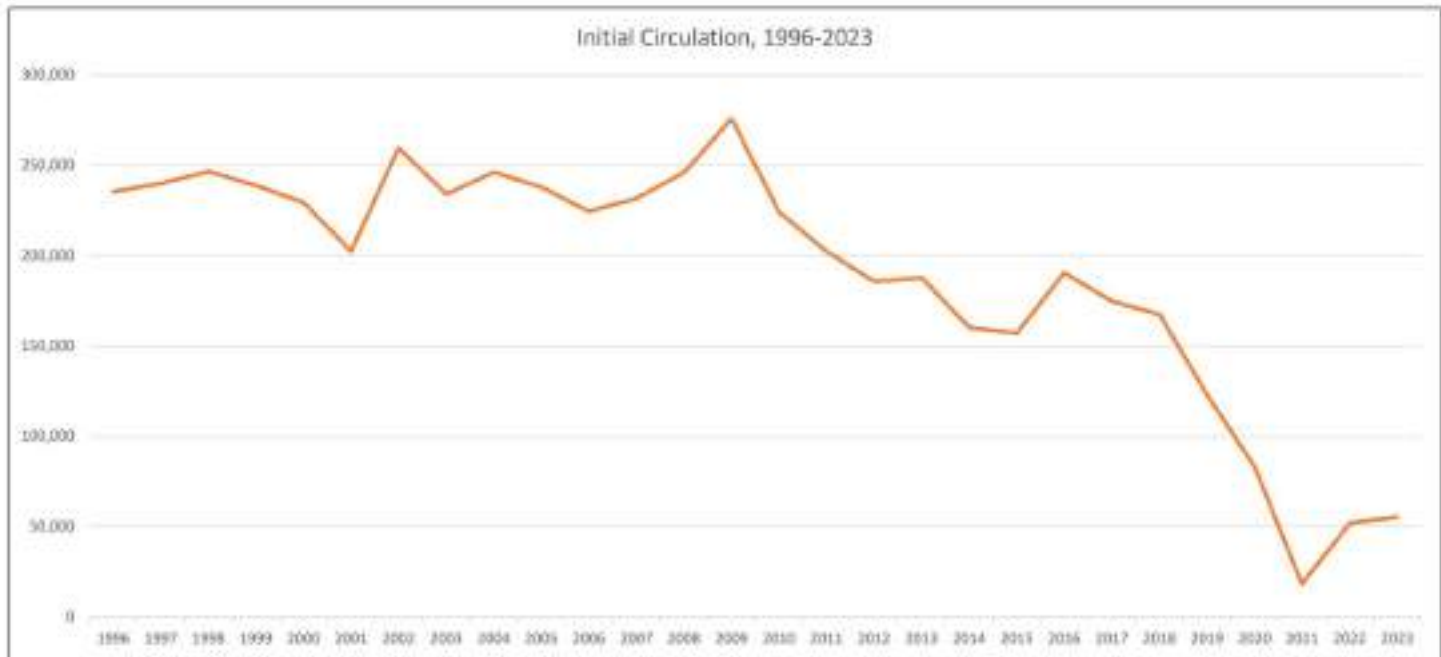


# Assessing the Value of Area Studies Print Resources in the Digital Age

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# Starting from Circulation Statistics



# Introduction



Thrust of the Research: This project seeks to investigate the extent to which print remains a critical format in area studies collections amid massive technological change. How can we most effectively assess the value of our acquisitions work and serve user needs in these areas?

# Moving Towards Area Studies Team Conversations

- Regular tracking circulation and usage of area studies materials
- Incorporating ILL statistics into conversation
- Parsing out foreign language materials from English language materials
- Refining classes labeled area studies
- Difficulties of comparing e- and print usage
- Promoting our area studies collections



# Surveying the Field



Understanding  
Area Studies  
Publishing  
Trends



Assessing  
Changing  
User Needs



Assessing  
Print Usage &  
Effectiveness  
of Collecting

# Collection Development in Area Studies



I followed the literature that looks at the publication and distribution of area studies materials, the degree of penetration of e-books in the book market, the work of area studies librarians with in-region vendors, and the importance of collecting print-only, and especially low-print-run materials.

## Key Studies

**Baig, Sohaib.** "Islamic Law Collections across 14 North American Libraries," Harvard University Program in Islamic Law (2023).

**Carter, Sunshine, et al.** Report of the University of Minnesota Libraries Area Studies Collections Task Force (2021).

**Silva, Sócrates and Manuel Ostos.** "No, It's Not Online; It's in the Stacks: Latin American Collections in US Academic and Research Libraries" in *Transforming Print: Collection Development and Management for Our Connected Future* (2021).

### **Reports on Publishing in the Arab World:**

Abou-Zeid, Eschweiler & Goehler, Al Qasimi, Al-Aufi, Rashad, etc.

### **Area-Specific Library Association Statements:**

SALALM (2020), MELA (2020), SACOOP (2018/2021)

Many area studies materials remain print only

Institutions are increasingly moving towards collaborative collecting initiatives

Area studies materials cannot often be acquired effectively via PDA because they quickly go out of print

# Takeaways

Declines in print collecting from overseas result in one or two copies for the whole U.S.

Collecting comprehensively is often no longer a feasible goal

# Assessing Changing User Needs



I followed the literature that examines how user behavior and research practices within area studies disciplines are evolving in response to digital availability, disciplinary norms, and linguistic diversity. This body of work explores faculty and graduate students' shifting expectations for access, the persistence of print preference in humanities research anchored by a "core text," and the limited substitutability of English-language e-resources for primary and secondary sources in other languages.

## Key Studies

**Atallah, Mariette and Anaïs Salamon.** "Adapting Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies Librarianship to Changing Users' Needs." *MELA Notes* 93 (2020).

**Cooper, Danielle Miriam, et al.** Supporting Research in Languages and Literature. Ithaka S+R Report (2020).

**Hatanaka, Risa.** Using Japanese sources for academic research : information-seeking behaviours of graduate students. Graduate Thesis, University of British Columbia (2020).

**Li, Xiang.** "Citing East Asia: A Citation Study on the Use of East Asian Materials in East Asian Studies Dissertations" *College & Research Libraries* 80:4 (2019).

**Ostos, Manuel.** "What Do They Use? Where Do They Get It? An Interdisciplinary Citation Analysis of Latin American Studies Faculty Monographs, 2004–2013." *College & Research Libraries* 78:5 (2017).

**Schadl, Suzanne M. and Marina Todeschini.** "Cite Globally, Analyze Locally: Citation Analysis from a Local Latin American Studies Perspective." *College & Research Libraries* 76:2 (2015).

Continued importance of the physical “core text” for humanities research

Print area studies materials remain highly cited at the graduate and faculty level

# Takeaways

Print materials can later be digitized and made available to users electronically via ILL or course reserves

Even where user preferences for e-books are displayed, sometimes electronic options are not available

# Assessing Print Usage & Effectiveness of Collecting



I looked at the literature that evaluates how print collections are used and how effectively libraries' acquisition strategies align with actual user demand. This research compares methodologies for measuring print and e-resource usage, highlighting the limitations of circulation and click-based metrics as directly comparable indicators. Percent expected use was also used to assess whether specific subsets of a collection perform above or below predicted levels of engagement.

## Key Studies


**Fry, Amy.** "Factors Affecting the Use of Print and Electronic Books: A Use Study and Discussion." *College & Research Libraries*, 79:1 (2018).

**Knowlton, Steven A.** "A Two-Step Model for Assessing Relative Interest in E-books Compared to Print." *College & Research Libraries* 77:1 (2016).

**Luo, Jiebei.** "A Statistical Analysis of Patrons' In-Library Information Consumption Behaviors of Print Materials," *College & Research Libraries* 82:6 (2021).

**Smith, Perri.** "The Viability of E-Books and the Survivability of Print." *Publishing Research Quarterly* 37 (2021).

**Wells, David and Anita Sallenbach.** "Print Books and Ebooks: The New Equilibrium in an Academic Library." *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* 72:2 (2023).


$$\frac{\textit{PercentofTotalLoans}}{\textit{PercentofOverallCollection}} = \textit{PercentExpectedUse}$$

Difficult to compare e-  
and print usage statistics

Demonstrated value  
of print collecting  
sometimes most  
easily visualized  
through circulation  
statistics

Different methodologies  
emphasized number of uses  
versus percent expected use  
(PEU) versus use after a given  
period of time post-acquisition

# Takeaways

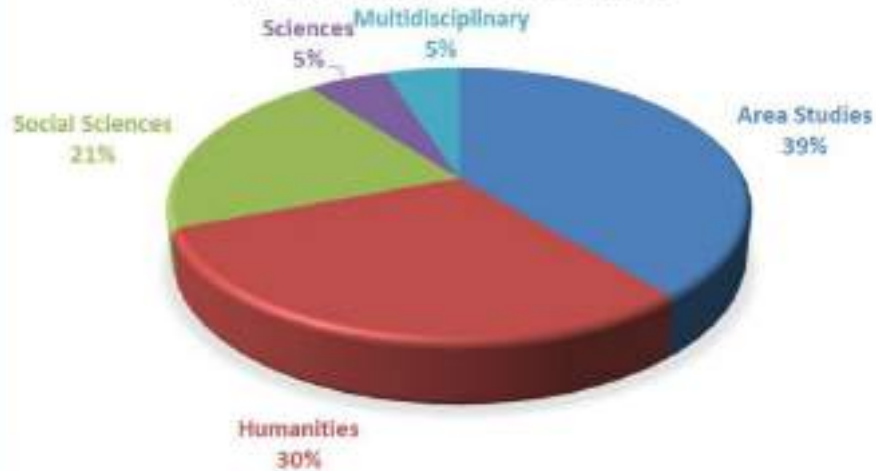
Some types of use  
get  
overemphasized in  
usage statistics  
others  
de-emphasized

PEU methodologies  
assume all types of  
books, languages,  
subjects equally likely  
to be used by patrons

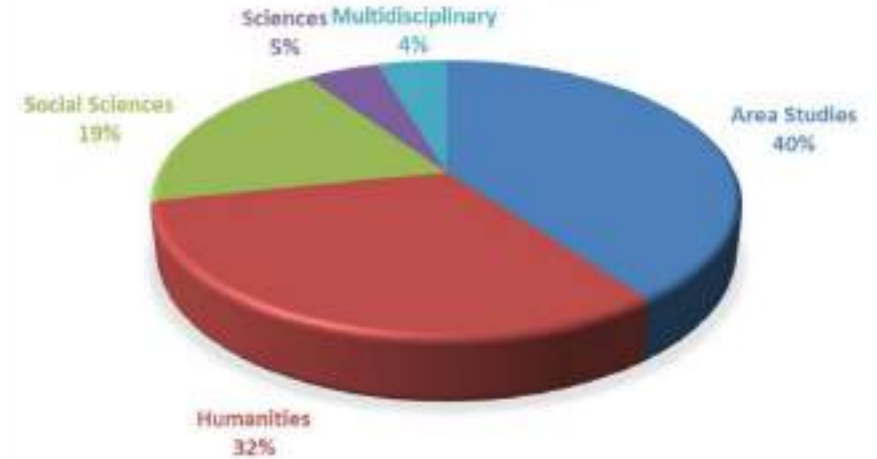
Breaking down exactly  
what constitutes the area  
studies collection could  
be difficult

# Starting from General Circulation Statistics (April 2025)

## FY23 PRINT BOOK USAGE



## FY24 PRINT BOOK USAGE



## Some Caveats

LC Classification	Subject
A	General Works
B	Philosophy, Psychology, Religion
C	Auxiliary Sciences of History
D	World History & History of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, etc.
E	History of the Americas
F	History of the Americas
G	Geography, Anthropology, Recreation
H	Social Sciences
J	Political Science
K	Law
L	Education
M	Music & Books on Music
N	Fine Arts
P	Language & Literature
Q	Science
R	Medicine
S	Agriculture
T	Technology
U	Military Science
V	Naval Science
Z	Bibliography, Library Science, Information Resources

List of LC classes and their corresponding subject areas

Subject categories based on overarching program categories from GMS used when reporting collection statistics

Subject categories	LC Subclasses
Area Studies	DA-DX, E, F, P-PZ
Social Sciences	BF, G-GB, GF-GV, H, J
Humanities	AZ, B-BD, BH-BX, C, D, M, N
Sciences	GC, GE, Q, R, S, T
Multidisciplinary	AC-AY, K, L, U, V, Z

Language	Number of	Number of	Percent of C	Percent of	Percent Us	Percent of	Percent of F	Deviation f	Percent Expected Use (Foreign Language)
English	1782634	78030	74.928%	86.441%	11.513%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
German	134703	2058	5.662%	2.280%	-3.382%	22.58%	16.81%	-5.77%	74.45630860182700%
French	106064	2221	4.458%	2.460%	-1.998%	17.78%	18.15%	0.36%	102.05022244094400%
Spanish	99975	2284	4.202%	2.530%	-1.672%	16.76%	18.68%	1.90%	111.33663381662900%
Arabic	67833	2059	2.851%	2.281%	-0.570%	11.37%	16.82%	5.45%	147.92743315681300%
Italian	39506	806	1.661%	0.893%	-0.768%	6.62%	6.58%	-0.04%	99.42723933946590%
Chinese	32949	468	1.385%	0.518%	-0.866%	5.52%	3.82%	-1.70%	69.22086360640580%
Japanese	25208	330	1.060%	0.366%	-0.694%	4.23%	2.70%	-1.53%	63.79827683814500%
Portuguese	24758	585	1.041%	0.648%	-0.393%	4.15%	4.78%	0.63%	115.15258872366300%
Language	Number of	Number of	Percent of C	Percent of	Percent Us	Percent of	Percent of F	Deviation f	Percent Expected Use (Foreign Language)
English	1782634	59488	74.928%	84.373%	9.445%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
German	134703	1411	5.662%	2.001%	-3.661%	22.58%	12.81%	-9.78%	56.71028039219740%
French	106064	2985	4.458%	4.234%	-0.224%	17.78%	27.09%	9.31%	152.36611087596500%
Spanish	99975	1944	4.202%	2.757%	-1.445%	16.76%	17.64%	0.88%	105.27297526212100%
Arabic	67833	1139	2.851%	1.615%	-1.236%	11.37%	10.34%	-1.03%	90.90646051813980%
Italian	39506	750	1.661%	1.064%	-0.597%	6.62%	6.81%	0.18%	102.78038791658100%
Chinese	32949	805	1.385%	0.858%	-0.527%	5.52%	5.49%	-0.03%	99.40888087910460%
Japanese	25208	293	1.060%	0.416%	-0.644%	4.23%	2.66%	-1.57%	62.92761601956470%
Portuguese	24758	588	1.041%	0.834%	-0.207%	4.15%	5.34%	1.19%	128.58011666299700%
Language	Number of	Number of	Percent of C	Percent of	Percent Us	Percent of	Percent of F	Deviation f	Percent Expected Use (Foreign Language)
English	1782634	29367	74.928%	87.285%	12.357%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
German	134703	839	5.662%	1.899%	-3.763%	22.58%	14.94%	-7.65%	66.14509229423710%
French	106064	941	4.458%	2.797%	-1.661%	17.78%	22.00%	4.22%	123.70739397964800%
Spanish	99975	837	4.202%	1.893%	-2.309%	16.76%	14.89%	-1.87%	88.84276306671000%
Arabic	67833	803	2.851%	2.387%	-0.464%	11.37%	18.77%	7.40%	165.06255286907100%
Italian	39506	261	1.661%	0.776%	-0.885%	6.62%	6.10%	-0.52%	92.11948136853200%
Chinese	32949	213	1.385%	0.633%	-0.752%	5.52%	4.98%	-0.54%	90.13872302614280%
Japanese	25208	105	1.060%	0.312%	-0.747%	4.23%	2.45%	-1.77%	58.07977771571530%
Portuguese	24758	208	1.041%	0.616%	-0.422%	4.15%	4.86%	0.71%	117.14447548512900%

## Percent Expected Use (Foreign Languages)

German    French    Spanish    Arabic  
Italian    Chinese    Japanese    Portuguese



# Thank you very much for your time



If you have any questions about this presentation, please don't hesitate to contact me:

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DANKE!  
THANK YOU!  
MERCİ!  
GRAZIE!  
GRACIAS!  
DANK JE WEL!

