

User Delinquency in Law College Library, Sri Lanka: Perception of the Students

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User malpractices of Library materials by highlighting, underlining, removing papers/parts of the page, binding barcode labels, call numbers labels and damaging or defacing library materials is a threat to the library collection. Such practices can be describe as abusing of the library materials. According to the stock count carried out in (2017), 78 books (out of 4320) were highly abused and removed from the lending collection in the library. Therefore this survey was conducted with following objectives; to identify the various forms of abuse, to identify reasons for the abuse and to identify the possible solutions to protect the library collection. The survey was conducted by using questionnaires with close and open ended questions. Students (75) were selected for the study and 69 responded and the rate was 92% from years of first year, second year and final year.

The respondents gave their answers to the forms of abusing library materials mainly tearing away pages, writing notes inside text books, highlighting/underlining the pages, mutilation, hiding, of books. According to the reasons for the abuse of the library materials, 65% of students mentioned that rare materials not allowed to be photocopied, 68% claimed the inadequate numbers of copies and 59% indicated high cost of photocopying charges. The respondents proposed a variety of strategies to protect the collection too. The study recommended proper orientation to users. The number of copies of demanded text books should be increased. Improving of photocopying services of the library. Introduce and electronic system as RFID machines. Regularly reviewed set of library instruction should be drawn.

Keywords: User delinquency, Abuse of library materials, Mutilation, Malpractices of readers, Law collection.

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