

## **2.56 Collection Development Policies in the University Libraries in Sri Lanka**

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### **ABSTRACT**

All Library Services are collection based. Libraries cannot exist without collections. Collection of materials that record human thought by libraries can be defined as library collections. Since the library is a growing organism it is inevitable that all types of libraries should engage in the development of their collections. University libraries are considered to be central to the entire education and research activities of universities. Therefore the carefully developed collections that satisfy the user needs are essential to university libraries.

The present study is an investigation of the collection development policies of the university library in Sri Lanka. Thoughtfully prepared policy framework is a must in order to develop a balanced and effective collection in a university library. Fifteen university libraries except those in north and east have been selected for the study. Data gathering was mainly done by using questionnaire method. Questionnaire was targeted at finding out the collection development policy of each library.

It was found that no university library examined under the survey had written collection development policy, other than traditional norms used in book selection. As a result the collections were not balanced and unable to satisfy user needs satisfactorily. Unnecessary duplication, unused materials, lack of needy resources, frustration of users, inefficiency in delivering information services were seen as direct results of the absence of proper collection development policy.

It is suggested that each university library in Sri Lanka should formulate a collection development policy in consultation with relevant stakeholders within the university as well as outside the university. Such a policy must be a written document and should undergo periodical revisions to reflect the changes in education and research activities of the university. Collections developed on such a policy could only deliver the maximum benefit to the clientele.