

Abuse of Library Materials by the Undergraduate Students with Special Reference to Main Library, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

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Abstract

The study sought to identify abuse of library materials in the Library, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. User malpractices of Library materials by highlighting, underlining, removing papers/ parts of the page, damaging barcode labels, call number labels and damaging or defacing library materials is a threat to the library collection. Such practices can be described as abusing of the library materials. This survey was conducted with following objectives; to identify the various forms of abuse, to examine the reasons for the abuse and to suggest the possible solutions to protect the library collection. The survey was conducted by using questionnaires with close and open ended questions. Students (240) were selected for the study and out of it 204 were responded and the rate was 85%. The responders mentioned that text books were mostly abused material in the library and respondents gave their answers to the ways of abusing library materials mainly tearing away pages, folding pages, writing on pages of the materials. According to the reasons for the abuse of the information materials, 62% of students mentioned that high demand of a particular book, 58% limited copies of the information materials, 48% poor photocopying machine and 30% indicated selfishness. The respondents proposed a variety of strategies to protect the collection too. The study recommended that abusers should be subjected to heavy and well defines penalties and mount cameras (CCTV) in the library. The number of copies of demanded text books should be increased. Improving photocopying services of the library. Introduce and electronic system as RFID machines. Regularly reviewed set of library instruction should be drawn.

Keywords: *Library abuse, University libraries, Preservation, Malpractices of readers, Library materials*

Introduction

The abuse of information materials can be defined in terms of theft, mutilation, unauthorized borrowing, drawing and vandalism. Mutilating library materials by marking, underlining, removing pages or portion of pages, removing binding, removing barcodes, removing call number labels, damaging or defacing library materials seriously affect the library. Abuse of library materials or mutilation and theft in libraries is a serious and harmful issue in any library.

The Wayamba University of Sri Lanka was started in 1999 as the 13th university of the country. The library of the university started in the same year as a university library. The