

A study about leadership challenges and issues faced by Sri Lankan state university libraries in the disruption era

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At present, a number of crisis situations are being emerged in the Sri Lankan society. They have affected every aspect of the society such as political, economic, educational, administrative, etc. Libraries are also experiencing this crisis and finding possible solutions. As a result, the library sector in Sri Lanka is largely adapting to the digital environment. University libraries play a key role there. They strive to maintain library resources and services online as much as possible. It is important to identify how the library leadership face this task. The main purpose of this research is to identify the leadership challenges and issues faced by the university library leaders. Other objectives of this study are to identify the key skills and abilities that he or she should obtain as a library leader, and to explore leadership development opportunities. The Survey method has been used for this study and interviews were the data collecting method. The population of the study is library leaders of state university libraries in Sri Lanka. As the sample, 10 senior assistant librarians were randomly selected from state university libraries representing the population. The participants were interviewed through face-to-face meetings and telephone conversations. Data analysis was done by describing the data which were collected. According to the study, several major challenges and issues can be identified in rebuilding the prevailing library services and new library services on digital platforms, marketing library resources and library services on the digital platforms and handling financial scarcities. Further, they should guide to improve ICT skills and professional skills of the library staff. ICT skills, communication skills, team working skills, managerial skills of the administration, and managerial skills in human resources in changing situations must be acquired by library leaders in the university libraries. Library leaders should attend skills development programs, leadership development programs, and training programs for ICT skills and tend to acquire new technologies of ICT. In addition, they should always pay attention to keep training ICT skills and new technologies for library staff.

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