

A study on misuse of library materials by university students with special reference to Kelaniya, Peradeniya, and Wayamba University Libraries.

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Abstract

The study sought to identify the misuse of library materials by university students. This study focused on ways university students misuse Library resources, the factors affecting such misuse, and the means to protect resources from such misuse. The study was conducted by using questionnaires with close and open-ended questions. The numerical approach proposed by Krijici and Morgan was carried out. Using that table students (378) were selected for the study and out of them 325 responded and the rate was 86%. When data were analyzed, 59% of respondents pointed out that the resources were seriously damaged by drawing lines on documents. And 50% stated that removing essential pages from the documents harmed resources.

The issues of hiding books and removing pages of books also played a prominent role in this. The high cost was the main factor affecting students' misuse of library resources. It was 76% as a percentage. Also, inefficient library photocopying services, insufficient reader awareness programmes, inadequate self-reading facilities, and unsatisfactory opening hours of libraries were significant factors. Several strategies were offered to guard resources from misuse. They were reducing the price of photocopying services, organizing user awareness programmes, and expanding electronic library services. The librarians also stated that they had to organize user awareness programmes, install electronic

security systems and cameras, and expand library services. To evade the misuse of library materials, university students need to improve their library usage. In that case, library management should extend the opening hours of the university library. Awareness programmes should be organized as one of the main activities to improve the present status. These programmes can provide them with a practical understanding of the distribution of library resources and how they are organized and accessed. In conclusion, this study identified the factors affecting university students' misuse of resources and the measures and remedies to be adopted by the libraries to reduce them.

Keywords: *Library resources, Academic libraries, Resource theft, Library security, Preservation*