

500 Assessment of Satisfaction of the Participants in 16th Colombo International Book Fair

P.K. Jayasekara

The Colombo International Book Fair (CIBF) has been, the Sri Lanka's premier national book fair organized annually by Sri Lanka Book Publishers Association since 1999. The 16th CIBF was held at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH), Colombo, Sri Lanka, from September 10th to 17th 2014 from 9.00 am to 9.00 pm., which comprised over 400 stalls consisted with local and foreign publishers. Other than selling books with discounts, it provides opportunities for author and reader discussions, book signing, great variety of food stalls and some other carnival-like activities. The number of participants to the CIBF is not good evidence about the successfulness of it. User satisfaction is one way criteria to measure the successfulness. Thus, objective of this research is to measure the user satisfaction about the 16th CIBF. Data was collected using an online questionnaire which developed using Google forms. The target group was the members in a Facebook group called "Pothe Kiyawana Aya" that consists of 54,901 members in September 2014. The objective of this group is to share ideas about books among friends around the world. The URL of the online questionnaire was published in that Facebook group to get responses. 526 people have responded to the questionnaire within a one week period. 42% respondents were not satisfied with the support provided by the staff in the stalls and 36% said that they received satisfactory support. The overall satisfaction about the 16th CIBF was 37.9% and nearly half of the visitors (51.6%) was not satisfied about it. Overcrowding was the major reason behind less satisfaction. Increase the duration of the exhibition and spacious stalls will reduce the overcrowding. The organizers must develop plans to reduce queue time at the entrance and at the cashier and providing proper parking facilities will help to increase the customer satisfaction.

Key words: Book Exhibition, Book Publishing, Colombo Book Fair