

The Impact of Recent Flood Hazard on the Public Libraries in Sri Lanka: A Survey

Wickramasinghe, W.P.D.

dilani@apiit.lk

Abstract

Disaster is an incident which can be caused or produced by two main factors are like man-made and natural. This paper demonstrates the damaged suffered by public libraries of Kalutara and Ratnapura districts during May and early June 2017 floods. Other objectives are to investigate the actions being taken by librarians during and after the floods in those two areas and to examine how far the librarians ready to face natural disasters in the future.

Nine public libraries were used to collect the primary data from Kalutara and Ratnapura districts. Two public libraries in Kalutara district-Tebuwana and Neboda and other seven public libraries in Ratnapura district- and they are Madduwa, Muwagama, Batugedara, Devalayagawa, Polhengoda, Dammulla, and Pathakada public library.

The sample of this study involves librarians or their assignees of those inundated libraries and the questions consist of open-ended and the respondents were required to answer freely. Relevant data were collected from them by conducting a telephone interview. The collected data were analyzed and tabulated as per the set of objectives of the study.

Among all libraries, disaster management teams have not been appointed yet and they do not possess duly prepared disaster plans yet. The study revealed a number of strategies are there to be implemented to ensure effective disaster management process which include a proper training on conservation and preservation, disaster management and planning, to use modern Information Communication Technologies, particularly the social media for the prevention, getting ready, pay attention and to have necessary skills and competencies in the deliberated area.

Keywords: *Disaster management, Flood effected libraries, Public libraries, Natural disasters, Conservation, Preservation*