

26**A Study of the Piriven Library Collection in Sri Lanka:
With Special Reference to Western Province Piriven
Libraries**

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Abstract

Buddhist temples were the foundation of Sri Lankan old education system. The education of Sri Lanka which commenced at “Kalapprasada Pirivena” in Anuradhapura, developed as “Pirivena” subsequently. Piriven Library is the main information centre for the Pirivena education process. The Piriven Libraries, which represent the academic libraries, are increasing the knowledge and skills of the students in various subjects and languages, and fulfil the teacher's academic information requirements. Accordingly, the main objectives of this study were to identify the nature of the Pirivena Library collection and its contribution to fulfilling the information needs of pirivena students. Specific objectives were identifying students' attitudes towards library collections, identifying issues related to library collections and identifying the library conservation methods. The study was based on the survey method and population of the study were all pirivena students in the western province. Stratified random sampling method was used to select the sample. Accordingly, 15 Piriven libraries were selected as the study sample. The data obtained

by randomly distributing the questionnaires among the five students from each Pirivena and the interviews with the teachers in charge of the Pirivena Library were used as the primary data. Secondary data was collected through printed sources which were considered relevant to the research. MS excel software was used to analyse the primary data obtained through the questionnaires. It was revealed that, although there was a large collection in the Pirivena libraries, while a period has been set aside for the use of libraries, most of the students from the sample do not use library collection systematically when searching for the information needed for their learning process. Unbalance of library collections, lack of up-to-date information, poor preservation of library materials, poorly organized collections, poor collections, etc. are the main reasons for this situation. Suggestions were made to employing a Librarian with a Library Professional Education, introducing a Collective Development Policy to better develop the collection. By preserving the rare and precious books in the collection, the Piriven Libraries collection can be arranged properly to meet the requirements of the utility.

Keywords: Piriven Libraries, Library collection, Information Needs, Pirivena Education