Current Status of the Knowledge Classification in the Public Libraries of Sri Lanka: Problems and Future Directions (A Case Study in Anuradhapura District)

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Abstract

This paper analytically investigates the Current Status of the Knowledge Classification in the Public Libraries of Sri Lanka with the perspectives of its problems and future directions as a case study within the Anuradhapura District. The major objective of the study was to gain an understanding of the current classification systems in Sri Lanka's public libraries and other objectives of the study were to determine the root causes of not using formal classification systems in these libraries if so and finally to guide the authorities for the further implementation about the productive classification systems. A survey method was used for this research. All the 30 public libraries in the Anuradhapura district of the North Central Province (NCP) were used as the population for the research and a questionnaire was distributed among the librarians of those libraries to cover the entire population. Duly filled 24 questionnaires were returned (Response rate = 80%) and from them, the primary data were collected. The data were computerized through Excel software and the final results were analyzed. Tables, graphs and diagrams were used to present the information uncovered in the research. Secondary data for the study were collected from the annual reports, websites and the Department of Census. In the observation of the study results, it was mainly revealed that the knowledge classification system implemented in the public libraries of the North Central Province is at a successful level. However, it was observed that about 65% of the respondents used colour codes to identify the books in an informal way. Using separate colours for species classes belonging to the same Dewey taxonomy revealed no uniformity among libraries. The majority of the respondents stated that there is no formal guideline for classifying knowledge. At the end of the study, it was revealed that the methods used to classify knowledge in public libraries should be monitored from a scientific background. For this purpose, it was recommended that relevant local government bodies and policy-making bodies should act directly on the library profession.

Keywords: Anuradhapura, Colour code, Knowledge classification, Library, NCP