

Efficiency of Library Extension Services to Promote Reading Habits Among School Children: A Case of a Selected Educational Zone in North Central Province

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ABSTRACT:

The school library plays a vital and central role in the teaching and learning process children's education at school. It is observed that the tendency of students reading and use of library is limited. Therefore, librarians are expected to play a critical role in enhancing students reading habits. In this regard, extension services are aimed at facilitating schools in encouraging reading habits among students. This study focuses on investigating the current situation of school libraries in a selected educational zone in Sri Lanka. It explores the types of extension services used by the librarians and identify the existing obstacles in relation to implementation of extension services in libraries. The empirical data was collected through a randomly selected sample of 102 librarians using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed quantitatively using Microsoft excel software. The results indicate that the majority use the library for reading literature books while less attention on subject related readings. The findings show that the lack of human and physical resources is the key problem of libraries in this zone while limited budget allocations for school libraries and absent of proper training programme are among the other problems. Reading camp is the most popular extension method used by students. This investigation impels that the action are required to overcome the existing barriers especially in terms of providing adequate budget allocations, human and physical resources, long-term planning and awareness programs.

Keywords: Reading Habits, school libraries, Extension services, school children, information literacy.